

Box # 41  
Jewelry



John W. H.



*The Pourtraicture of the profitable  
and faithfull Minister of Gods wor  
John Preston, D:D: Chaplaine  
ordinary to his Majestic, Master  
Emmanuel Colledge in Cambridge,  
sometimes Preacher of Lincolnes I*

*Will: Marshall sculp: Rich: Harper excudit*





THE  
CHRISTIANS  
PATTERN,  
or  
The following  
of  
CHRIST.

Cambridg. Printed by R. Daniell. 1642.



Serve God —  
heartily; —  
And enjoy your  
friends cheerfully

C.F.

he  
th  
G  
d  
fo  
an  
C  
co  
th  
th  
T  
th  
la  
vi  
w  
th  
A  
ri  
ch  
A  
w  
k  
C  
H

## To the Reader.

**C**hristianitie is the life of the soul, and Meditation is the life of Christianitie: a pious man hath alwayes God within him; but he onely that meditateth findeth him there: every religious soul affordeth God a lodging, but he onely that meditateth conferreth with him and giveth the entertainment. Now therefore if thou desirest to talk with God, and enter a dayly Dialogue with thy Creatour, reade this book; here is conference upon all occasions: reade this Authour, so well approved of, that he now by so many severall Translations speaketh more tongues, then ever spake Christ: for he is translated into the Turkish; you see what virtue the merit of this work carrieth with it, when the Imitation of Christ shall be prized by Christs enemies. A merchant going to Algiers in Mauritania to redeem some captives from their miserable slavery, found this Authour translated, and by the King wonderfully enriched with pearls, and kept (as he saith) in a more glorious Cabinet then ever Alexander kept his Homer in: sure the power of his  
worth

worth must needs be great, that it  
could force a pettie king to vanquish  
the Monarch of the world. Reader,  
in brief, take this Thomas a Kempis;  
dead, yet still a learner of new lan-  
guages; this blessed and unconfused  
Babel, who buildeth men not stones  
up to heaven. Take this Follower of  
Christ; thy example; Gods familiar  
friend and acquaintance; who whilst  
he lived on earth, I say not, He dwelt  
in heaven; but more, Heaven it self  
say God dwelt in Him.



The

# The Contents of the Chapters;

## The first Book.

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| <b>O</b> f the imitation of Christ, & contempt<br>of all worldly vanities | Chap. 1 |
| Of the humble conceit of our selves                                       | 2       |
| Of the doctrine of Truth  | 3       |
| Of wisdom & providence in our actions                                     | 4       |
| Of the reading of holy Scriptures   | 5       |
| Of inordinate desires, and affections                                     | 6       |
| Of flying vaine hope and pride  | 7       |
| That too much familiarity is to be shunned                                | 8       |
| Of obedience and subjection   | 9       |
| Of the avoiding superstition in words                                     | 10      |
| Of the obtaining of peace, and zeal of spiri-<br>tuall profit             | 11      |
| Of the profit of adversitie   | 12      |
| Of resisting temptations  | 13      |
| Of avoiding rash judgement  | 14      |
| Of works done of Charity  | 15      |
| Of bearing with the defects of others                                     | 16      |
| Of Religious life   | 17      |
| Of the examples of the holy Fathers                                       | 18      |
| Of the exercise of a religious person                                     | 19      |
| Of the love of solitude and silence                                       | 20      |
| Of Compunction of heart   | 21      |
| Of the consideration of humane misery                                     | 22      |
| Of the meditation of Death  | 23      |
| Of judgement, & punishment of sin   | 24      |
| Of the zealous amendment of our life                                      | 25      |

## The second Book.

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| <b>O</b> f spirituall conversation | 1  |
| Of humble submission               | 2  |
| Of a good and peaceable man        | 3  |
| ¶ 2                                | Of |

## The Contents.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Of a pure mind, and upright intention    | 4  |
| Of the consideration of ones self        | 5  |
| Of the comfort of a good conscience      | 6  |
| Of the love of Jesus above all things    | 7  |
| Of familiar conversation with Jesus      | 8  |
| Of the want of all comfort               | 9  |
| Of thankfulness for the grace of God     | 10 |
| How few the lovers of Christs Crosse are | 11 |
| Of the high way of the holy Crosse       | 12 |

## The third Book.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>O</b> f the inward speech of Christ unto a<br>faintfull soul                         | I  |
| That truth speaketh inwardly without<br>noise of words                                  | 2  |
| That the words of God are to be heard<br>with humility, and that many weigh<br>them not | 3  |
| That we ought to live in truth and humi-<br>lity in the sight of God                    | 4  |
| Of the wonderfull effect of divine grace  | 5  |
| Of the proof of a true Lover  | 6  |
| That grace is to be hid under the veil of<br>humilitie                                  | 7  |
| Of a meane conceit of our selves in the<br>sight of God                                 | 8  |
| That all things are to be referred unto<br>God, as unto the last end                    | 9  |
| That despising the world, it is sweet to<br>serve God                                   | 10 |
| That the desires of our heart are to be exa-<br>mined and moderated                     | 11 |
| Of the effect of patience, & of strife against<br>concupiscence                         | 12 |

## The Contents.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ               | 13 |
| Of the secret judgments of God to be considered, lest we be extolled in our good deeds | 14 |
| What we ought to do and say in every thing we desire                                   | 15 |
| That true comfort is to be sought in God alone   | 16 |
| That all our care is to be placed in God   | 17 |
| That temporall miseries, by the example of Christ, must be borne patiently             | 18 |
| Of suffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient                        | 19 |
| Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miseries of this life          | 20 |
| That we are to rest in God above all his gifts   | 21 |
| Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God                                     | 22 |
| Of foure things that bring much peace  | 23 |
| Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others  | 24 |
| Wherein the firm peace of the heart and true profit consisteth                         | 25 |
| Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble prayer better deserueth then reading    | 26 |
| That private love most hindreth from the chiefest Good                                 | 27 |
| Against the tongue of Slanderers   | 28 |
| How we ought to call upon God, & blesse him when tribulation draweth near              | 29 |
| ¶ 3  | Of |

## The Contents.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Of craving the divine aid, & confidence<br>of recovering grace                      | 30 |
| Of the contempt of all creatures, to find<br>our Creator                            | 31 |
| Of deniall of our selves, and forsaking<br>all our affections                       | 32 |
| Of constancy of heart, and of directing<br>our finall intentions unto God           | 33 |
| That God is sweet above all things, & in<br>all things, to him that loveth          | 34 |
| That there is no security from temptation<br>in this life                           | 35 |
| Against the vain judgements of men  | 36 |
| Of a full & pure resignation of our selves,<br>for the obtaining freedome of heart  | 37 |
| Of good government in outward things,<br>and of recourse to God in dangers          | 38 |
| That a man be not over-earnest in his af-<br>fairs                                  | 39 |
| That man hath no good of himself, nor<br>any thing whereof he can glory             | 40 |
| Of the contempt of all temporal honors  | 41 |
| That our peace is not to be placed in men   | 42 |
| Against vain and secular knowledge  | 43 |
| Of not drawing outward things to our<br>selves                                      | 44 |
| That credit is not to be given to all men, &<br>how prone man is to offend in words | 45 |
| Of putting our trust in God when evil<br>words arise                                | 46 |
| That all grievous things are to be endured<br>for life everlasting                  | 47 |
| Of  |    |



## The Contents.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Of the everlasting day, and shortnesse of<br>this life  | 48 |
| Of the desire of everlasting life, and how<br>great rewards are promised to those<br>that fight valiantly       | 49 |
| How a desolate person ought to offer him-<br>self into the hands of God   | 50 |
| That a man ought to imploy himself in<br>works of Humilitie, when strength is<br>wanting for higher employments | 51 |
| That a man ought to esteeme himself un-<br>worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve<br>stripes                  | 52 |
| That the grace of God is not given to those<br>that savour of earthly things                                    | 53 |
| Of the different motions of Nature and<br>Grace   | 54 |
| Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy<br>of divine Grace  | 55 |
| That we ought to denie our selves, & imi-<br>tate Christ by the Crosse  | 56 |
| That a man be not too much dejected, when<br>he falleth into some defects                                       | 57 |
| Of not searching into high matters, and<br>into the secret judgements of God                                    | 58 |
| That all our hope and trust is to be fixed<br>in God alone  | 59 |

## The fourth Book.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| With how great reverence Christ<br>ought to be received                         | 1 |
| That great goodnesse & charitie of God is<br>bestowed on man, in this Sacrament | 2 |
| That it is profitable to communicate often                                      | 3 |

## The Contents.

|   |    |
|---|----|
| That many benefits are bestowed upon<br>them that communicate devoutly.   | 4  |
| Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and<br>Ministeriall function  | 5  |
| An Interrogation of the exercise before<br>Communion  | 6  |
| Of the discussing of our own conscience,<br>and purpose of amendment  | 7  |
| Of the oblation of Christ on the Crosse, and<br>resignation of our selves   | 8  |
| That we ought to offer up our selves & all<br>that is ours unto God, & to pray for all                                      | 9  |
| That the holy Communion is not lightly<br>to be forborne.   | 10 |
| That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scri-<br>ptures, are most necessarie unto a<br>faithfull soul                         | 11 |
| That he who is to communicate ought to<br>prepare himself with great diligence  | 12 |
| That a devout soul ought to desire with<br>her whole heart to be united unto Christ<br>in the Sacrament                     | 13 |
| Of the fervent desire of some devout per-<br>sons to receive the Body of Christ   | 14 |
| That the grace of devotion is obtained by<br>humility and deniall of our selves   | 15 |
| That we ought to manifest our necessities<br>to Christ, and crave his grace   | 16 |
| Of fervent love, and vehement desire to<br>receive Christ   | 17 |
| That man be not a curious searcher of this<br>Sacrament, but an humble follower of<br>Christ, submitting his sense to faith | 18 |

## THE FIRST BOOK

## CHAP. I.

*Of the imitation of Christ, and contempt  
of all worldly vanities.*



He that followeth me, walketh not in darknesse, saith our Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are admonished, that we ought to imitate his life and manners, if we will be partakers of his Divine light, and be delivered from all blindnesse of heart. Let therefore our chiefest care be to meditate upon the life of Jesus Christ.

2. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all humane doctrine, and he that hath the light of the Spirit, will discover therein a secret and hidden Manna. But it falleth out, that many, who often heare the gospel of Christ, do yet feel in themselves but slender motion of any holy desire, because they are void of the spirit of Christ. But whosoever will fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavour to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be

A void

void of humility, and thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel compunction, then understand the definition thereof. If thou diddest know the whole Bible by heart, and the sayings of all the Philosophers, what would all that profit thee, without charity and the grace of God? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but onely to love God, and wholly to serve him. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the kingdome of heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after fading riches, and to repose trust in them. It is also vanity to gape after honours, and to climbe to high degree. It is vanity to follow the appetite of the flesh, and to labour for that, for which thou must afterwards suffer more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be carelesse to live well. It is vanity to mind onely this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come. It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where everlasting joy is permanent.

4. Call often to mind this proverb,  
That

That the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the eare filled with hearing. Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the affection of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible. For they that follow their sensuality, do stain their own consciences, and lose the grace of God.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the humble conceit of our selves.*

**A**LL men by nature desire to know: but what availeth knowledge without the fear of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that seareth God, is better then a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself laboureth to understand the course of the heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth daily more contemptible in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of men. If I understood all that is to be known in the world and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judge me according to my deeds?

2. Give not thy self to inordinate desire of knowledge, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to o-

A 2                      thers,

thers, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul: and he is very unwise that bestoweth his labour about other things then those that may avail him for the health of his soul. Many words do not satisfie the desires of the heart: but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unlesse thy life be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any art or science which thou knowest: but rather let the knowledge given thee make thee more faithfull. If thou thinkest that thou understandest and knowest much; know also that there be many things more which thou knowest not. Think not too well of thy self, but rather confesse thine ignorance. Why wilt thou preferre thy self before others, sith there be many more learned and skilfull then thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitable, desire not to be known, and to be little esteemed of by man.

Ch. 3. or, *The following of Christ.* 5

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledge and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think alwayes well and commendably of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sinne, or commit any hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self: for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteem none more frail then thy self.

### CHAP. III.

*Of the doctrine of Truth.*

**H**APPY is he whom Truth by it self doth teach, not by figures and voyces that passe away; but as it is in it self. Our own opinion and sense do often deceive us, and it discerns little. What availeth it to dispute and contend about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we shall not so much as once be reprehended at the day of judgement. It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtfull: we have eyes and see not.

A 3

2. And

2. And what have we to do with the terms and distinctions of Logicians? He to whom the Iternall Word speaketh, is delivered from multitudes and diversities of opinions. By that one Word all things do speak, and all declare the same: and this is the beginning, and that which speaketh unto us. No man without that Word understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, the eternall Truth make me one with thee in everlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to reade and heare many things. In thee is all that I would have, and can desire. Let all Doctours hold their peace; let all creatures be silent in thy sight: speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is retired within himself, and becometh inwardly sincere, and pure, so much the more and higher mysteries doth he understand without labour: for that he receiveth light of understanding from above. A pure, sincere, and stayed spirit is not distracted, though it be employed in many works: for that it works all to the honour of God, and labours for inward tran-



Ch.3. or, *The following of Christ.* 7

tranquillity, without seeking it self in any thing it doeth. Who hinders and troubles thee more then the unmortified desires of thine own heart? A good and godly man first of all disposeth in himself his outward works: neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them to the prescript of reason. Who hath a greater combat, then he that laboureth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavour, to conquer our selves daily, to wax stronger, and be more able to subdue our passions, and alwayes in this way to get some ground.

4. All perfection in this life hath some imperfections mixt with it: and no knowledge of ours is void of darknesse and ignorance. An humble knowledge of thy self is a more secure way to God, then a deep search after learning: yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the onely knowledge of any thing whatsoever is to be disliked, it being good in it self, and ordained by God; but a good conscience, and a virtuous life is to be preferred before it. And for that many endeavour rather to get knowledge, then to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reap either none or very slender profit of their labours.

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, and planting of virtues, as they do in moving doubts and questions! neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandall be given in the world, nor so much loosnesse be practised in places ~~consecrated~~ <sup>ordained</sup> for virtue. Truly at the ~~day~~ <sup>day</sup> of judgement we shall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done: not how well we have spoken, but how virtuously we have lived. Tell me now, where are all those great Doctors and Masters with whom thou wast well acquainted, whilst they lived and flourished in learning? Now others possesse their livings, and perhaps do scarce ever think of them. In their life time they seemed something, and now they are not spoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of this world passe away! Would God their life had been answerable to their learning, then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this world by reason of vain learning, who take little care of the service of God? And because they rather choose to be great then humble, therefore they vanish away in their vain imaginations.

Ch. 4. or, *The following of Christ.* 9  
ons. He is truly great that is great in  
charity. He is truly great that is  
little in himself, and that maketh no  
account of the height of honour. He  
is truly wise, that accounteth all  
earthly things as dung, that he may  
gain Christ. And he is truly learned,  
that fulfilleth the will of Christ, and  
forsaketh his own.

#### CHAP. IV.

*Of wisdom and providence in our  
actions.*

**W**E must not give care to every  
suggestion or instinct, but  
ought warily and leisurely to ponder  
things according to the will of God.  
But (alas!) such is our weaknesse  
that we rather often believe, and  
speak evil of others then good. Those  
that are perfectly virtuous do not easily  
give credit to every thing that is  
told them; for they know that humane  
frailty is prone to evil, and very  
subject to fail in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be  
rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand  
stiffely in thine own conceits; as also  
not to believe every thing which thou  
hearest, nor presently to relate again  
to others, what thou hast heard or  
dost believe. Consult with him that  
is

is wise, and of a good conscience, and seek to be instructed by a better then thy self, rather then to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a man wise according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himself, and more subject and resigned unto God; so much the more prudent shall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the reading of holy Scriptures.*

**T**Ruth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in holy Scripture. Each part of it is to be read with the same spirit it was made. We should rather search after spirituall profit in Scriptures, then subtilty of speech. We ought to reade plain and devout books as willingly as high and learned. Let not the reputation of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or small learning: but let the pure word of truth move thee to reade. Search not who spake this or that, but mark what is spoken.

2. Men passe away; but the truth of our Lord remaineth for ever. God speaketh unto us sundry wayes, without

Ch. 6. or, *The following of Christ.* 11

our respect of persons. Our own curiosity often hindreth us in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine and discusse that which we should rather passe over without more ado. If thou desire to reap profit, reade humbly, plainly, and faithfully: never desire the estimation of learning. Inquire willingly, and heare with silence the words of holy men: dislike not the parables of Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

#### CHAP. VI.

*Of inordinate desires, and affections.*

**W**Henever a man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest. The poore and humble in spirit live together in all peace. The man that hath not wholly subdued himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner subject to his appetites, and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to retire himself from them: and easily

easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse or conscience: for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quiet of mind therefore, is gotten by resisting our passions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnall man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spirituall and fervent.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of shying vain hope and pride.*

**H**E is vain that putteth his trust in men or creatures. Be not ashamed to serve others for the love of Jesus Christ; nor to be esteemed poore in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thee. Trust not in thine own knowledge, nor in the wisdom or prudence of any living creature: but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth the presumptuous and proud.

2. Glo-

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in the power of thy friends; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extoll not thy self for the stature and beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with every little sicknesse. Take not pleasure in thy naturall gifts or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever nature hath given thee.

3. Esteem not thy self better then others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in man, thou be accounted worse then they. Be not proud of welldoing: for the judgements of God are farre different from the judgements of men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayst the better keep within thy heart the precious treasure of humility. It is no prejudice unto thee to esteem thy self worse then all the world: but it hurteth thee very much to preferre thy self before any one. The humble enjoy continuall peace: but in the heart of the proud is envy and indignation.

## CHAP. VIII.

*That too much familiarity is to be  
shunned.*

**L**ay not thy heart open to every  
one; but treat of thy affairs with  
the wise and such as fear God. Con-  
verse not much with young people  
and strangers. Flatter not the rich;  
neither do thou appear willingly be-  
fore great personages. Keep company  
with the humble, simple, devout, and  
virtuous; and confesse with them of  
those things that may edifie. Be not  
familiar with any woman; but in ge-  
nerall commend all good women to  
God. Desire to be familiar with God  
alone and his Angels, and sic the  
knowledge of men.

2. We must have charity towards  
all, but familiarity with all is not  
expedient. Sometimes it falleth out,  
that the fame of some person that is  
unknown, is much esteemed; whose  
presence notwithstanding is not  
gratefull to the eyes of the behold-  
ers. We think sometimes to please  
others by our company, and we ra-  
ther distast them with our disorder-  
ed manners, and the evil customes  
which they discover in us.

CHAP.



## CHAP. IX.

*Of obedience and subjection.*

**I**T is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a superiour, and not to be at our own disposing. It is much safer to obey then to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for necessity then for charity: such are discontented, and do easily repine and murmur. Neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unlesse they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest but in humble subjection under the government of a Superiour. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sense and liking; and is apt to affect those most that are of his own mind: But if God be amongst us, we must leave our own judgement, that so peace and quietnesse may be the better preserved. Who is so wise that he can fully know all things? Trust not therefore too much to thine own conceits; but be willing to heare the judgement of others. If that which thou thinkest be good, and  
not-

notwithstanding thou forsakeſt it for God, and followeſt the opinion of another, it ſhall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is more ſecure to heare and take counſel, then to give it. It may alſo fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to reſuſe to yield to others when as reaſon or cauſe requireth it, is a token of wilfulneſſe and pride.

## CHAP. X.

*Of the avoiding ſuperfluity in words.*

**F**Ly the unquietneſſe of men as much as thou canſt: for the talk of worldly affairs hindreth very much, although they be recounted with ſincere intention; for we are quickly deſiled, and as it were enthralled with vanity. I could wiſh that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have ſpoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we ſo willingly ſpeak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we ſeldome return to ſilence without hurt of conſcience? The cauſe why we ſo willingly talk, is for that by diſcourſing one with another, we ſeek to receive comfort one of another; and deſire to eaſe our mind over-wearied with ſundry thoughts: and

Ch. II. or, *The following of Christ.* 17

we talk willingly, and think of those things which we love best, and most desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesome unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end: for this outward comfort is the cause of no small losse of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time passe without any fruit or profit. If it be lawfull and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edifie.. An evil custome and neglect of our own good doth give too much libertie to inconsiderate speech: Yet devout discourses of heavenly things do greatly further our progresse in spirit, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

## CHAP. XI.

*Of the obtaining of peace, and Zeal of spirituall profitt.*

**W**E might enjoy peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other men which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, or that little or sel-

B                      dome

domer recolleteth himself within his own breast? Blessed are the simple and pure minds; for they shall enjoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they laboured to mortifie themselves wholly to earthly desires: and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and freely attend to their own affairs. We are too much lead by our own passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldom overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to profit in spirit: and therefore we remain cold in devotion, and scarce warm in religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our selves, and not entangled within our own breasts; then we might also have some tast of divine things, and feel the sweetnesse of heavenly contemplation. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not free from our passions, and disordered inclinations; neither do we endeavour to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us: and when any small adversity befalleth

Ch. 11. or, *The following of Christ.* 19

us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we endeavour like men of courage to stand continually in the battell; surely we should feel the favourable assistance of God from heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succour those that fight manfully, and do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progresse in religious life, to consist onely in these exterior observations, our devotion will quickly be at an end. Let us lay the ax to the root, that being freed from passions, we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every yeare we would root out one vice, we should quickly become perfect men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goeth contrary, and that we were better and of a more pure conscience at the beginning of our conversion, then after many years of our profession. Our fervour and profit should increase daily; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first spirit. If we would use but a little violence in the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and joy of heart.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to do against our own wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things, how wilt thou overcome harder matters? Resist thy inclination in the first motions, and break off evil customes, lest perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didst consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shouldst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldst be more carefull of thy spirituall profit.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the profit of adversity.*

**I**T is good that we have sometimes grief and adversities: for they often make a man enter into himself, and remember that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or hard conceit had of us: and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain glory: for then we chiefly seek God for our inward

Ch. 13. or, *The following of Christ.* 21  
ward witnesse, when outwardly we  
be contemned by men, and when  
there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a man should  
settle himself so fully in God, that  
he needed not to seek many comforts  
of men. When a good and virtuous  
man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled  
with evil thoughts; then he under-  
standeth better the great need he  
hath of God's assistance, without  
whose help he perceiveth he can  
do nothing that is good. Then also  
he sorroweth, lamenteth, and pray-  
eth for the miseries he suffereth.  
Then he is weary of living longer,  
and wisheth that death would come,  
that he might be dissolved and be  
with Christ. Then also he well per-  
ceiveth, that complete security and  
perfect peace cannot be had in this  
world.

### CHAP. XIII.

#### *Of resisting temptations.*

SO long as we live in this world we  
cannot be without tribulation and  
temptation; for as it is written in Job,  
Temptation is the life of man upon  
earth. Every one therefore ought to  
be carefull, and diligently to arm  
himself with prayer against his tem-  
ptati-

ptations, lest the devil find time and place to deceive him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations: and we cannot be altogether free from them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to men, though they be troublesome & grievous: for in them man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate and fell from God. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or adversities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations whilst he liveth on earth: for in our selves is the cause thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh; and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we have lost that innocency with which we were created. Many seek to flee temptations, and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility we become stronger then all our enemies.

4. He



4. He that onely avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots shall profit little: yea temptation will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case then before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome then with violence, and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations: and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort, as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves: so the man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many wayes tempted. Fire trieth iron, and temptation a just man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchfull, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the doore of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, Withstand the beginnings, for an

after remedie comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind an evil thought, then a strong imagination thereof, afterwards delight and an evil motion, and then consent: and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth full entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much the longer one is negligent in resisting, so much the weaker doth he become daily, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion; others in the latter end; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the state and deserts of men, and ordaineth all things for the saving of his elect and chosen servants.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulation; who surely according to the saying of S. Paul will make with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to sustain it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations  
and

Ch. 14. or, *The following of Christ.* 25  
and tribulations; for he will save and  
exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions  
man is proved how much he hath  
profited; and his reward is thereby  
the greater before God, and his vir-  
tues do more openly appear. Nei-  
ther is it any great matter if a man  
be devout and fervent, when he feel-  
eth no heavinesse; but if in time of  
adversity he bear himself patiently,  
there is hope of great good. Some are  
kept from great temptations, and are  
often overcome in small ones which  
do daily occur; to the end that be-  
ing humbled, they may never presume  
on themselves in great matters, who  
in so small things do see themselves so  
weak.

#### CHAP. XIV.

*Of avoiding rash judgement.*

**T**urn thine eyes unto thy self, and  
beware thou judge not rashly  
the deeds of other men. In judging  
of others a man alwayes laboureth  
in vain, often erreth, and quickly sin-  
neth; but in judging and discussing of  
himself, he alwayes laboureth fruit-  
fully. We often judge of things ac-  
cording to our own desires: for pri-  
vate affection bereaves us easily of  
true

true judgement. If God were alwayes the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled with the repugnance of our sensuality.

2. But oftentimes some inward secret inclination, or outward affection occurreth, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion; but if it succeed otherwise then they desire, they are straight-ways troubled, & much afflicted. The diversities of judgements and opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions between religious and devout persons.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, and no man is willingly lead further then himself liketh. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, then upon the virtue of obedience to Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou be illuminated with grace: for Almighty God will have us perfectly subject unto him, and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

## CHAP. XV.

*Of works done of Charity.*

**F**Or no worldly thing, nor for the love of any man, is any evil to be done: but yet for the profit of one that standeth in need, a good work is sometimes to be left off, or changed also for a better. For by doing this, a good work is not lost, but changed into a better. The exterior work without charity profiteth nothing; but whatsoever is done of charity be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it is fruitfull and of great esteem in the sight of God. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, then how much he doeth. He doeth much, that loveth much.

2. He doeth much that doeth a thing well: he doeth well that rather serveth the common good of others, then his own will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality: because naturall inclination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our own commodity will seldome be wanting.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but onely desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted.

He

He also envieth none; because he loveth no private good: neither will he rejoyce in himself; but wisheth above all things to enjoy God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all Saints have perfect rest by fruition of his glory. O, he that had one spark of perfect charity, how easily would he discern that all earthly things be full of vanity!

# CHAP. XVI.

*Of bearing with the defects of others.*

**T**Hose things that a man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, untill God ordain otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy triall and patience, without which all our good deeds are not much to be esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray, notwithstanding when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned doth not amend, contend not with him; but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his  
name

name honoured in all his servants, who knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, for that thy self also hast many things which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have an other in all things to thy likings? We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected our selves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us: and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under by rigorous laws; but in no sort will we our selves be restrained. And thus it appeareth, how seldome we weigh our neighbour in the same ballance with our selves. If all men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordained, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden: for no man is without defect, no man without burden, no man sufficient of himself, no man endued with so much wisdom as he needeth; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another,

ther, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Adversity best discovereth how great virtue each one hath: for occasions make not a man frail, but do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.  
*Of Religious life.*

**T**Hou must learn to break thy own will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in community, or in a congregation, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully untill death. Blessed is he that hath there-lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt persevere in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in virtue, esteem thy self as a banished man, and a pilgrime upon earth. Thou must be contented for the love of Christ to be esteemed as a fool in this world, if thou desire to lead a virtuous and perfect religious life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and shaving of the crown do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions make a true religious man. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the health of his soul, shall find nothing but



Ch. 18. or, *The following of Christ.* 31

but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboureth not to be in the meanest place, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to be served. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labour, not to be idle, or to spend thy time in talk. Here in the school of Christ men are proved as gold in the furnace. Here no man can stand, unlesse he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

## CHAP. XVIII.

*Of the examples of the holy Fathers.*

Consider the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these dayes. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them! The Saints and friends of Christ served our Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakednesse, in labour and wearinesse, in watching and fasting, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproches.

2. O, how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessours, Virgins, and all the  
rest.

rest that endeavoured to follow the steps of Christ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possess their souls in everlasting life. O how strait & poore a life lead those holy Fathers in the wilderness! How long and grievous tentations suffered they! How often and how grievously were they assaulted by their ghostly enemy! How fervent prayers offered they daily to God! How rigorous abstinence did they use! How fervent zeal and care had they of their spirituall profit! How strong and continuall a combat had they for the overcoming of vices! How pure and upright intention kept they unto God! In the day they laboured, and in the night they attended to continuall prayer, although when they laboured also they ceased not from mentall prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit: every houre seemed short for the service of God, and for the great sweetnesse they had in contemplation they forgot the necessity of corporall refection. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kinsfolks; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life; they grieved

Ch. 18. or, *The following of Christ.* 33

to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poore in earthly things, but rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were replenished with grace and spirituall comfort.

4. They were strangers in the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing and abject to this world: but they were precious & beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in charity and patience: and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in God's sight. They were given for an example and pattern of perfection in Gods Church, and their example should more stirre us up to a desire of our spirituall profit, then the number of the lukewarm and dissolute livers draw us to the neglect thereof.

5. O how great was the fervour of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution! How great was their devotion to prayer? How diligent emulation of virtue? How exact discipline flourished? How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiours, observed they in all things? Their footsteps

C

ycc

yet remaining do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect men; who fighting so valiantly trode the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that breaketh not the rule, and that can with patience endure that which he hath professed.

6. O coldnesse and negligence of our time, that we so quickly decline from our first fervour, and are come to that passe, that very sloth and coldnesse of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the holy examples of devout and religious souls.

## CHAP. XIX.

*Of the exercise of a good and religious person.*

**T**He life of a religious person ought to shine with all virtues: that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, then is perceived without: for God beholdeth the heart, whom we ought most highly to reverence wheresoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight; and

Ch. 19. or, *The following of Christ.* 35

to renew daily our purposes, and stir up our selves to fervour, as though this were the first day of our conversion, and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and grant that I may now this day begin perfectly: for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the successe of our profit: and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldome purposeth any thing, or with little certainty? It may fall out sundry wayes that we leave off our good intents, and the least omission of spirituall exercises bringeth no little hinderance to our souls. The determinations of the just depend upon Gods grace, and not upon their own wisdom; upon whom they alwayes rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For man doth purpose, but God doth dispose, neither is the way of man in his own hands.

3. If usuall exercise be sometimes omitted either for piety towards God, or profit to my neighbour, it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a sloth-  
C 2 full

full mind or carelesse negligence we forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and very prejudiciall to our selves. Let us do the best we can we shall fail in many things, yet let us alwayes take some-certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into and set in order both the outward and the inward man, because both of them are very necessary to our coming forward in godlinesse.

4. If thou canst not continually call thy self to an account, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning consider what thou intendest to do, and at night examine thy self what thou hast done. How thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbour. Gird thy loyns like a man against the vile assaults of the devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavouring something for the publick good. As for  
bodi:

bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practiced of all men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to publick view; for things private are practiced more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for private occasions. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoyned to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the diversity of times also divers exercises are fitting. Some sute better with us on working-dayes, other on holy-dayes: some we have need of in temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietnesse. Some we mind when we are pensive, and other some when we rejoyce in the Lord.

6. When chief festivalls draw near, good exercises are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should think thus with our selves, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to be

made partakers of that everlasting feast in heaven. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves against such holy times, and lead our conversation so strictly as though we were shortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labours.

7. But if our departure be deferred, let us think with our selves that we are not sufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of so great glory which shall be revealed to us in due time; and let us endeavour to prepare our selves more diligently to our end. Blessed is that servant (saith S. Luke the Evangelist) whom when his Lord cometh he shall find him watching; verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

## CHAP. XX.

### *Of the love of solitude and silence.*

SEEK for an apt and convenient time to be at leisure to thy self, and meditate often upon Gods benefits and blessings. Meddle not with curiosities, but peruse such matter which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, then information to thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy self from speaking vainly and from gad-



Ch. 20. or, *The following of Christ.* 3.  
gadding idly, as also from hearken-  
ing after novelties and rumours, thou  
shalt find leisure sufficient and con-  
venient enough to meditate on good  
things. The greatest and best of  
Gods Saints avoided the society of  
men when they could conveniently,  
and did rather choose to live secret-  
ly, and set themselves apart unto  
God.

2. One said, As oft as I have been  
among men, I returned home lesse a  
man then I was before; and this we  
find true when we talk long toge-  
ther. It is easier not to speak a word  
at all, then not to speak more words  
then we should: It is easier for a man  
to keep home, then to keep him-  
self well when he is abroad. He  
therefore that intends to increase in  
the spirit and inner man, must with  
Jesus depart from the multitude and  
presse of people. No man safely doth  
go abroad, but he which gladly can  
abide at home: no man speaks secure-  
ly but he that holds his peace wil-  
lingly. No man ruleth safely but he  
that is ruled willingly: no man se-  
curely doth command, but he that  
hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man rejoyceth securely, un-  
lesse he hath the testimony of a good  
conscience; yet the security of the

Saints was alwayes full of the fear of God. Neither did those eminent gifts and excellent graces that were in them, make them more haughty, but more humble. But the security of the wicked as it ariseth of pride and presumption, so in the end it deceiveth them and turneth to their own destruction. Although thou seem to be a good religious man, or never so devout, yet promise not thy self security in this life.

4. It falleth out many times that those have fallen into greatest danger by overmuch confidence and presumption, who have been in greatest esteem and account amongst men. Wherefore it is better for many not to be altogether free from temptations, but often assaulted, lest by too much security they should be puffed up with pride, or rely too much upon worldly comforts. O how good a conscience would he keep, that would not seek after transitory joy, who would not entangle himself with the affairs of this world. O how great peace and quietnes should he possesse, that would cast away all vain cares, and think onely upon heavenly things, and would place all his hope and confidence in God!

5. No man is worthy of heavenly  
com-

Ch. 20. or, *The following of Christ.* 41

comfort, unlesse he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy closet, and shut out all worldly tumult, as it is written, Examine your own hearts upon your beds and be still. In thy closet thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the lesse thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loth it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6 In silence and in quietnesse a devout soul maketh her self perfect, and learneth the secrets and mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth floods of tears wherein she may every night wash and cleanse her self that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creatour, by how much the farther off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Whoso therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God and his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better to live privately and to have regard to himself, then to neglect himself and his own salvation.

on, though he could work miracles\* It is very commendable in a religious person seldome to go abroad, to be unwilling either to see or be seen.

7. Why art thou willing and desirous to see that which is unlawfull for thee to have and enjoy? for the world passeth away and the lusts thereof. Our sensuall desires draw us to rove abroad, but when the pleasure is past, what carriest thou home with thee but a grieved conscience and distracted mind? A merry going out bringeth commonly a mournfull return home; and a joyfull evening makes many times a sad morning. So all carnall joy hath a pleasant entrance, but in the end it biteth like an Adder, and stings like a cockatrice. What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here? behold, here are Heaven and Earth and all the Elements; for of these are all things created.

8. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the sun? thou thinkest perchance to satiate thy self and have thy fill, but thou shalt never attain it. Shouldst thou see all things present before thine eyes, it were but a vain and unprofitable sight: lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray him to pardon

don all thy sinnes and infirmities. Leave vain things to the vain, and do thou give heed to that which God commandeth; shut the doore upon thy self, and call unto thee Jesus thy Beloved. Stay with him in thy closet, for thou shalt not find so great peace any-where else: Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumours, thou hadst lived more at content. Seeing therefore thou delightest sometimes to heare news, it is fit thou suffer for it some unquietnesse and trouble of mind.

## CHAP. XXI.

*Of Compunction of heart.*

**I**F thou wilt profit any thing, keep thy self alwayes in the fear of God, and yield not too much scope to libertie. Keep in aw all thy senses under the severe rod of discipline, and give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt find much devotion therein: compunction bringeth much good which dissolutenesse is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any man can heartily rejoyce in this life, if he duly consider his banishment, and thoroughly weigh the many perils wherewith his  
soul

soul is invironed. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our faults makes us insensible of the sorrows of our souls.

2. But oftentimes we vainly laugh when we have just cause to weep: the service and fear of God is the truest liberty, and a good conscience a continuall feast. Happy is he that can avoid all cause of distraction, and recollect himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully: one custome overcometh another. If thou canst forbear meddling in other mens matters, they likewise shall not have to do with thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou meddle at all with the affairs of thy betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favour of men, be not grieved at it; but take this to heart, because thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly as it becometh the servant of God, and a devout religious man. It is better oftentimes and more secure that a man hath not consolations in this life, especially  
such

such as are consonant to our carnall desires. But that we have not at all or do very seldome tast divine consolation, the fault is ours, because we seek not after inward compunction, as having not altogether forsaken outward vanities.

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast deserved much tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and lothsome unto him. A good man findeth alwayes sufficient cause of mourning: for whether he consider his own or his neighbours estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without great tribulation. And by how much a man looks narrowly into himself, by so much he sees greater cause of lamentation. Our sinnes and wickednesses wherein we lie weltring, that we can seldome apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do minister unto us much matter of sorrow and compunction.

5. Didst thou but as often think with thy self how soon thou maist die, as how long thou maist live, there is no question but thou wouldst willingly undergo any labour or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest severity. But because

we do not take these things to heart, and as yet love those things onely that delight us, this makes us so dull and key-cold in religion.

6 If our body be amisse we may thank our selves for it: it is often our decay and want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so easily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchsafe to give thee the spirit of contrition. And say with the Prophet, Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteousnesse of tears to drink.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of the Consideration of humane misery.*

**M**iserable thou art wheresoever thou be, or whithersoever thou turnest, unlesse thou turn thy self unto God. Why art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldest or desirest? for who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any man upon earth; there is none in this world be he King or Pope, without some tribulation or other. Who is then in the best estate or condition? even he who for Gods sake can suffer affliction.

2. Many



2 Many weak and frail men can say, O what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how mighty he is, in how great honour and credit! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou shalt perceive that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome then delightfull, because they are never enjoyed without carefulnesse and fear. Mans happinesse consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a man hungreth after godlinesse, the more he abhorreth this life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labour and to rest, and to be subject to other necessities of nature, is doubtlesse a great misery to a devout mind, that would gladly be free and delivered from sinne.

3. For the inward man is much oppressed with these outward and corporall necessities whilest we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying,  
*Draw*

Draw me, O Lord, out of my necessities. But wo be to them that know not their own misery; and a greater wo to them that take delight in this miserable and corruptible life. And some there be so much dote upon it, although with great labour and pains they can scarce get bread to eat, yet could they live here alwayes, they would care but little for the kingdom of heaven.

4. O how mad are these in their brains and faithlesse in their hearts, who lie so deeply drowned in the earth, that they can think of nothing but earthly things. But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost how vile and vain that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the fast friends of Christ look not on those things which pleased the flesh, and flourished for a time, but panted after everlasting treasures with all greedinesse and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisib'le, that the desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O brother lose not thy confidence to come forward in godlinesse; there is yet time, the houre is not yet past.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thine  
amend-

amendment from day to day, arise and begin this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be working, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time to profit best; thou must passe through fire and water before thou comest to a place of refreshing. Unlessse thou offer violence to thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sinne: so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without sinne, or live without sorrow. We could gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sinne we have lost our innocency, we have by that also forfeited our felicity. Therefore we must hold our selves content, and expect the mercy of God till this our iniquitie be put away, and this mortalitie of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty which is alwayes prone to evil! to day thou confessest thy sinnes, and to morrow thou committest the very same thou hast confessed. Now thou art in the mind to look well unto thy wayes, and within a while thou so behavest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such mind at all. Good cause have we therefore to  
D humble

humble our selves, and never to have any great conceit of our worth, we are so frail in our nature, so inconstant in our courses. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely? Wo be unto us if we will now give our selves unto ease, as if all were in peace and safetie, when yet there appeareth no signe of sanctity in our conversations! We have need like young beginners to be newly instructed again to good manners, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and spirituall progress.

### CHAP. XXIII.

#### *Of the meditation of Death.*

**T**Here will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a man, to morrow none; and out of sight out of mind. O the stupidity and hardnesse of mans heart, who thinketh onely upon the present, and hath no care of the time to come! Thou shouldest so order thy self

Ch.23. or, *The following of Christ.* 51

self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear conscience thou wouldst not greatly fear death: care not so much for the death of this body as the sinne of thy soul. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? thou knowest not what will be to morrow, and how knowest thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What are we the better to live long, if we prove not the better by long living? for length of dayes doth oftner make our sinnes the greater, then our lives the better. O that we had spent but one day well in this world! Many keep in mind how long it is since their conversion, and yet forget to fructifie in a holy conversation. If to die be accounted dreadfull, to live long may prove more dangerous. Happy is he that hath his end before his eyes, and prepareth himself to die daily. If at any time thou hast seen another man die, make account thou must follow him, he hath shewed thee but the way.

3. When it is morning think thou mayest die before night, and when evening comes, presume not upon

next morning. Be thou therefore alwayes in a readinesse, and so lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and when they look not for it: for the Sonne of man will come when we think not of his coming. When thy last sand shall be run out, thou wilt have a farre different opinion of thy whole life that is past, and be exceeding sorry thou hast been so carelessse and remisse.

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboureth to be such an one in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the houre of his death. To contemne the world perfectly, to go forward in virtue zealously, to love reproof willingly, to amend our lives seriously, to obey superiours gladly, to deny himself thoroughly, and to suffer affliction for his sake patiently, make us confident we shall die happily. Whilest thou art in health thou mayst do many good deeds, but when thou art sick I see not what thou art able to do. Few in the weaknesse of their bodies gather strength to their souls; as they who are walking abroad, are seldome settled at home.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care  
of

Ch. 23. or, *The following of Christ.* 53

of thy soul till hereafter: for men will sooner forget thee, then thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime, and do some good beforehand, then to trust to other mens courtesies. If thou dost not provide for thy self in this world, who will have care of thee in that which is to come. The time that is now present is very precious, now is the day of salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas that thou shouldst spend thy time so idly here, where thou mightst purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or houre to amend in, and it is a great question whether it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightst thou deliver thy self! from how great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be now fearfull and carefull how to die! Labour now to live so, that at the houre of death thou mayst rather rejoyce then fear: learn now to die to the world, that thou mayst begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemne all earthly things that thou mayst freely go to Christ. Chastise thy body now by repentance that thou mayst then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? how many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost thou hear these reports, Such a man is slain, another man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall, this man died eating, and that man playing? One perished by fire, another by the sword, another of the plague, and another was slain by thieves: thus death is the end of all, and mans life suddenly passeth away like a shadow.

8. Who shall remember thee when thou art dead? and who shall pray for thee when thou canst not help thy self? Do, do now my beloved whatsoever thou art able to do: for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time heap unto thy self everlasting treasures, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the service of thy God. Make now friends to thy self by honouring the Saints of God, and imitating their virtues, that when thou failest in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.



9. Esteem thy self as a stranger and pilgrime upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free from the world, and lifted up directly unto God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighes joyned with unfeigned tears, that after death thy spirit may be happily commended into the hands of the Almighty.

CHAP. XXIIII.

*Of judgement, and the punishment  
of Sinnes.*

IN all thy wayes have a speciall aim to thy end: for how canst thou be able to stand before a severe Judge to whom nothing is hid. Who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any frivolous excuses, but will judge according to right and equity. O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes fearest the countenance of an angry and ignorant man, what answer wilt thou make to an angry and all-knowing God? Why dost thou not provide for thy self against that great day of judgement, when no man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself? Now are thy pains

profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groanes audible, thy grief pacifieth for thy finnes and prepareth thy soul.

2. The patient man hath a great & wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of an other then for his own wrongs. Who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences, and delaith not to ask forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended. Who is sooner moved to compassion then to anger; who often offereth violence to himself, and laboureth earnestly to bring the body into subjection to the spirit. It is better to purge our sins and offences here, then to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive our selves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that feedeth that everlasting fire but thy sinnes? The more thou sparest thy self and followest thy pleasure now, so much the more hereafter shall be thy punishment, and a greater fewell added to that flame. In what thing a man hath sinned, in the same shall he be punished: there shall the slothfull be pricked forward with burning goads, and the gluttons vexed with great hunger and thirst. There shall the lascivious

lascivious and lovers of pleasure be bathed in burning pitch and stinking brimstone; and the envious like mad dogs shall howl for very grief.

4. There is no fault but shall have its proper and peculiar torment. There the proud shall be filled with all horreur and confusion: the covetous shall be pinched with exceeding penury: one houre of pain there shall be more bitter then a thousand years of the sharpest penance here. There is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there: yet here we have some intermission of our labours and enjoy the comfort of our friends. Be now solicitous and sorrowfull for thy sinnes, that at the day of judgement thou mayst be secure with the company of blessed souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldnesse stand against such as have vexed and oppressed them: then shall he sit to judge men, who is now content to be judged of men. Then shall the poore and humble have great confidence, but the proud man shall be compassed with fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised. Then shall affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity

iniquity shall be stopped up, then shall the devout rejoyce and the profane mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own flesh, then he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poore garment shine and glitter, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible: then shall be more commended the poore cottage, then the stately pallace. Then will constant patience more avail us then all earthly power, and simple obedience be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear conscience more rejoyce a man then the profound learning of philosophy, and the contempt of riches weigh more then all worldly treasures. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, then fared daintily: and be more glad thou hast kept silence, then that thou hast talked much. Then will good works prevail more then godly words: then a strict life and severe repentance will be more pleasing, then all earthly delight. Prove first here what thou canst indure hereafter, accustome thy self now to suffer a little, that thou mayest then be delivered from more grievous pains. If now thou canst  
endure

Ch. 24. or, *The following of Christ.* 59

endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetuall torments? if a litle suffering make thee so impatient, what will hell-fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises: it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that reigne for ever with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived alwayes in honour and delights, what would all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is but vanity and vexation of spirit, besides the love of God and his alone service. For he that loveth God withall his heart, is neither afraid of death nor judgement, nor of punishment, nor of hell: for perfect love gives secure accessse to God. But he that takes delight in sinne, what marvell is it if he be afraid both of death and judgement? Yet it is good although love be not of force to withhold thee from sinne, that at least the fear of hell should restrain thee. But he that laieth aside the fear of God, can never continue long in good estate, but falleth quickly into the inares of the devil.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Of the Zealous amendment of our  
whole-life.*

**B**E watchfull and diligent in the service of God, and often bethink thy self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the world. Was it not that thou mightst live to God, and become a spirituall man: be fervent then to come forward, for shortly thou shalt receive a reward of thy labours. There shall not be then any fear or sorrow in thy coasts: labour but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetuall joy to thy soul. If thou continuest faithfull and fervent in doing good, no doubt but God will be faithfull in rewarding thee. Thou oughtst to have a good hope in getting the victory, but thou must not be secure of it, lest thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, O, if I knew that I should yet persevere! he presently heard as it were a voice from God, which said, What if thou didst know it,

It, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure. And being herewith comforted and strengthened in mind, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased: neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of God, for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in our Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from that spiritual good, and the diligent amendment of their lives: the horreur of the difficulty, and the labour of the combat. But they above others profit most in virtue, that endeavour most to overcome those things which are grievous, and contrary unto them. For there a man profiteth more, and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself and mortifieth the outward man.

4. But all men have not alike to overcome and mortifie: yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more  
in

in virtue then another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be lesse fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selves violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and to labour earnestly for that virtue which we most want. Be carefull also to avoid with great diligence those things in thy self, which do most displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul out of every occasion, and wheresoever thou be; so as if thou seest or hearest any good, stirre up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and comfortable a thing it is, to see the servants of Christ fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners! And on the contrary, How pitifull and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that for which they were called! O how great damage and danger is it, to neglect the good purposes



purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which appertaineth not unto them, nor is committed to their care !

6. Be mindfull of the profession thou hast made, and have alwayes before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Christ, seeing thou hast so slackly endeavoured to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast walked a long time in the way of the service of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any thing elswhere, but onely in Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed in all truth !

7. A fervent religious person taketh, and beareth all well that is commanded him : but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted : for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek externall comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline,

pline, is in great danger of the ruine of his soul. He that seeketh libertie and ease, shall ever live in disquiet: for one thing or other will alwayes displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but alwayes with our mouth, and whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightst never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightst alwayes praise God, and onely employ thy self in the exercises of spirit: thou shouldst then be much more happy then now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but onely the spirituall refectiōs of the soul, which, alas, we tast of too seldome.

9. When a man cometh to that estate that he seeketh no comfort of any creature, then doth he begin to take perfect contentment and delight in God. Then shall he be contented with whatsoever doth befall him in this world. Then shall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be sorrowfull for small, but with great integrity and confidence commie himself to God; who shall be unto him all in all, to whom nothing doth perish, nor die, but all things do live unto him,  
and

Ch. 25. or, *The following of Christ.* 65  
and serve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember alwayes thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evil with thee: but if thou give thy self to fervour of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, and feel lesse labour, through the assistance of Gods grace, and love of virtue. The fervent and diligent man is ready and prepared for all things. It is harder to resist vices & passions, then to toil in bodily labours. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt alwayes rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchfull over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others neglect not thy self. The greater violence thou usest against thy self, the more thou shalt profit.

E THE

## THE SECOND BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

*Of spiritmall conversation.*

He kingdome of God is within you, saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world, and thy soul shall find rest. Learn to despise exteriour things, and to give thy self to the interior, and thou shalt perceive the kingdome of God to come into thee. For the kingdome of God is peace, and joy in the holy Ghost, which is not given to the wicked. Christ will come into thee, and shew thee his diuine comfort, if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaseth himself. The inward man he often visits, and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant comfort, much peace, wonderfull familiarity.

2. O faithfull soul, make ready thy heart for this bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith: If any love me he will keep my words, and

Ch. I. or, *The following of Christ.* 67

and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him. Give therefore unto Christ a place in thy heart, & deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ thou art rich, and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithfull and provident helper in all things, so as thou shalt not need to trust in men. For men are soon changed, and quickly deceived; but Christ remaineth for ever, and standeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in frail and mortall man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughtest thou much to be grieved if sometimes he crosse and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee; and so on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy trust in God, and fear and love him: He will answer for thee, and do in all things what is best. Thou hast not here a dwelling citie; and where-soever thou be thou art a stranger and pilgrime: neither shalt thou ever have rest unlesse thou be perfectly united unto Christ.

4. Why dost thou linger, and make delays here, since this is not the place of thy rest? In heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly

things are to be regarded as it were in the way. All things passe away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them lest thou be enthrall'd, and so dost perish. Let thy thought be on the highest, and thy prayer directed unto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not contemplate high and heavenly things, rest thy self in the passion of Christ, and dwell willingly in the wounds of his sacred body. For if thou flie devoutly unto his holy wounds, and to the precious marks of his passion, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation: neither wilt thou much care for being despised of men, and wilt easily bear the words of slanderous tongues.

5. Christ was also in the world despised, and in great necessity, forsaken by his acquaintance and friends in the midst of slanders. Christ would suffer and be contemned; and darest thou complain? Christ had adversaries and backbiters; wilt thou have all men thy friends and benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to reigne with Christ.

6. If

6. If thou hast but once perfectly entred into the secrets of thy Saviour, and tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own commodity or discommodity, but wouldst rather rejoyce at slanders, when they should chance to be cast upon thee: for the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. A lover of Jesus and of truth, and a true spirituall person and free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in spirit, and with great joy of his soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said and esteemed to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by God then men. He that can live spiritually, and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times for performing of devout exercises. A spirituall man quickly recollecteth himself: because he never yieldeth over himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or businesse which may be necessary for the time: but as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth little for the vain inventions and

perverse inclinations of men. So much is a man hindred and distracted, how much he draweth matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and thou hadst thy heart well purged, all things would fall out to thy good and profit. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy self, nor free from the affection of earthly things. Nothing so defileth and in-trangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to creatures. If thou refuse outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of heaven, and often receive internall joy.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of humble submission.*

**R**espect not much who is with thee, or who is against thee. Endeavour and take care that God may be for thee in every thing thou doest. Have a good conscience and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hold thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee,



Ch. 3. or, *The following of Christ.* 71

thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resign thy self unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the better keeping of humility, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others, and quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and comforteth the humble: unto the humble man he inclineth himself: unto the humble he giveth great grace; and after his humiliation he raiseth him unto glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himself. The humble person though he suffer much outward affliction is in peace; for that he resteth in God, and relieth not on the world. Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unlesse thou esteem thy self inferiour to all.

### CHAP. III.

*Of a good and peaceable man.*

First keep thy self in peace, and then mayst thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good then

he that is well learned. A passionate man turneth good into evil, and easily believeth the worst. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and troubled is tossed with divers suspicions: he is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak; and omitteth that which were more expedient for him to do. He considereth what others are bound to do: and neglecteth that which he is bound to himself. First therefore have a carefull zeal over thy self, and then thou mayst justly shew thy self zealous of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse and colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou diddest accuse thy self, and excusedst thy brother. If thou wilt be born withall, bear also with another. Behold how farre off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation but onely against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that are of a gentle dispo-

Ch. 4. or, *The following of Christ.* 73

disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace; and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with the unquiet, & perverse minds, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict us, is a great grace and very commendable.

3. Some there are that keep themselves in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are some that neither are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace: they are troublesome to others, but alwayes more troublesome to themselves. And others there are that keep themselves in peace, and labour to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble suffering, then in not feeling adversities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himself in peace. He is a conquerour of himself, a Lord of the world, friend of Christ, and heir of heaven.

CHAP. IV.

*Of a pure mind, and upright intentions*

**W**ITH two wings man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with simplicity and purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in  
our

our affection. Simplicity fixeth the eyes of the soul in God: Purity apprehendeth and tasteth his sweetness. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from inordinate affection. If thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God, and the profit of thy neighbour, thou shalt enjoy internall liberty. If thy heart were sincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking-glasse of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature so little and abject that representeth not the goodnesse of God.

2. If in thine own heart thou wert good and pure, then thou wouldest be able to see and understand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth heaven, and pierceth the depth of hell. Such as every one is inwardly, so he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, surely a man of a pure heart possesseth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conscience feels it. As iron put into the fire loseth his rust, and becometh bright like fire: so he that wholly turneth himself unto God, becometh fervent, and is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold,

Ch. 5. or, *The following of Christ.* 75  
cold, then he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receiveth externall comfort. But when he once be-  
ginneeth to overcome himself perfectly, and to walk manfully in the way of God: then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.

## CHAP. V.

*Of the consideration of ones self.*

**W**E cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly lose by our negligence. And oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindness. We often do evil, and excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, and we think it to be zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and passe over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what others suffer from us. He that doth well and deeply consider his own works, will find little cause to judge hardly of another.

2. A spirituall man preferreth the care of himself, before all other cares.  
And

And he that diligently attendeth unto himself, doth seldome speak much of others. Thou wilt never be recollected and devout, unless thou passe over other mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou dost neglect thy self? If thou desirest peace of mind and true union, thou must esteem little of all earthly things, and look onely to thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporall cares. Thou shalt hinder thy self greatly, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing gratefull, nothing acceptable, but onely God himself, purely, or that which is for God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that be inferiour unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatnesse, filling all creatures: the comfort of the soul, and the true joy of the heart.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the comfort of a good conscience.*

**T**He glorie of a good man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear much, and is chearfull in adversities. An evil conscience is alwayes fearfull and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace: because there is no peace to the impious, saith our Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us? believè them not: for upon a sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be turned into nothing, and their conceits shall perish.

2. To glorie in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth. For to glory so, is to glory in the Crosse of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from men. Sorrow alwayes accompanieth the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladnesse of the just is of God, and in God: and

and their joy is of the truth. He that desireth true and everlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh temporall glory, or contemneth it not from his heart, sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glorie of heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillitie and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him: nor the more abject though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: neither canst thou be truly said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do alwayes well, and to esteem little of himself, is a token of an humble mind. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a signe of great puritie, and inward confidence.

4. He that seeketh no outward witnesse for himself, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself  
unto



unto God. For not he that commendeth himself, the same is approved (saith S. Paul) but whom God commendeth. To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with any outward affection, is the state of an inward and spirituall man.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of the love of Jesus above all things.*

Blessed is he that understandeth what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus. Thou oughtest to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Jesus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitfull and unconstant: the love of Jesus is faithfull and constant. He that cleaveth unto creatures shall fall with that which is subject to fall. He that embraceth Jesus shall stand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end. Thou must once be left of men, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Live and die with Jesus; and commit thy self unto his trust, who when all fail can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will none of that which appertaineth  
to

to others : but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldest purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou puttest in men, out of Jesus, is all no better then lost. Trust not nor relie upon a reed full of wind : for that all flesh is as hay, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look onely to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feel losse. If thou seekest Jesus in all things, thou shalt surely find Jesus. But if thou seekest thy self, thou shalt also find thy self, but to thy own harm. For man doth more hurt himself, if he seek not Jesus, then the whole world, and all his adversaries could annoy him.

#### CHAP. VIII.

*Of familiar conversation with Jesus.*

**W**Hen Jesus is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult: but when Jesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Jesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth : but if Jesus speak but  
one

Ch. 8. or, *The following of Christ.* 81

one word, we feel much consolation. Did not Marie Magdalen presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha said unto her, Thy master is here, and calleth thee? Happy is the houre when Jesus calleth from tears to spirituall joy. How drie and hard art thou without Jesus? How foolish and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Jesus? Is not this a greater losse, then if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Jesus? To be without Jesus is a grievous hell: and to be with Jesus is a sweet Paradise. If Jesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Jesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods. And he that loseth Jesus loseth too much, and more then the whole world. He is most poore that liveth without Jesus: and he most rich that is well with Jesus.

3. It is great skill to know how to converse with Jesus, and great wisdom to know how to keep Jesus. Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee. Thou mayest drive away Jesus and lose his grace, if thou givest thy self to outward things. And if thou  
F shouldst

shouldest drive him from thee, and lose him, unto whom wilt thou flee, & what friends wilt thou then seek? Without a friend thou canst not well live: and if Jesus be not above all a friend unto thee; thou shalt be too too sorrowfull & desolate. Thou doest therefore foolishly, if thou doest trust or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world against thee, then Jesus offended with thee. Amongst all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Jesus alone be thy chiefest beloved.

4. Love all for Jesus, but Jesus for himself. Jesus Christ alone is especially to be beloved; who alone is found to be good, and faithfull above all friends. For him, and in him, let aswell friends as foes be dear unto thee: and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth onely unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any: but let Jesus be in thee, and in every virtuous and good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature.

Ch.9. or, *The following of Christ.* 83

pure. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and carry a pure heart to God, if thou wilt consider, and prove, and see how sweet our Lord is. And truly, unlesse thou be prevented, and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happinesse to forsake and cast away all, that thou alone maist be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a man, then he is strong, and nothing is hard unto him. And when it goeth away, he is poore and weak, and as it were left unto the will of whomsoever will afflict him. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resigne thy self with all indifferencie unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befall thee for the glorie of Christ: for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

CHAP. IX.

*Of the want of all comfort.*

**I**T is no great matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and verie much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort: and for the honour and glorie of God, to be willing to endure  
F 2 desolation

desolation of heart ; and to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be cheerfull and devout at the coming of heavenly grace ? This houre is wished for of all men. He rideth easily whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvell if he feel not his burden who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the greatest guide.

2. We are alwayes willing to have something for our comfort: and a man doth hardly put off and forsake himself. The holy martyr Saint Laurence overcame the world with his Prelate: because he despised whatsoever seemed delightfome in the world, and for the love of Christ he patiently suffered the high Priest of God S. Sixtus to be taken from him, whom he most dearly loved. He overcame therefore the love of man by the love of the Creatour; and he rather chose the divine pleasure, then humane comfort. See thou also learn to forsake some necessary thing, and a beloved friend for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A man must fight long, and with a constant mind, before he get the victory, and be able to place his whole heart

Ch. 9. or, *The following of Christ.* 35

heart in God. When a man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts. But a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of virtue, giveth not himself to such solace, nor seeketh sensible sweetnesse; but rather forcible exercises, and to sustain hard labours for Christ.

4. When therefore spirituall comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully: but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly; but be rather the more humble for that grace, and more wary and fearfull in all thine actions, for that houre will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently; but with humility and patience attend the heavenly visitation: for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new, nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God: for in the great Saints and ancient Prophets, there was oftentimes such kind of alteration.

5. For which cause one when he had grace, said, I said in my prosperity I shall never be moved everlastingly. But when this was gone from

him, he addeth what he found in himself, saying, Thou turnedst thy face from me, and I became troubled. Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto our Lord, and saith, Alinto thee, O Lord, I will cry, and I will pray unto my God. Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying, Our Lord hath heard me, and taken pitie on me: our Lord is become my helper. But wherein? Thou hast turned, saith he, my sorrow into joy, and thou hast compassed me about with gladnesse. If great Saints have been so dealt withall, we that are weak and poore ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold: for the Spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Job saith, Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the onely hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good men, or devout brethren, or faithfull friends, or holy books, or learned treatises, or sweet songs and hymns,



Ch. 9. or, *The following of Christ.* 37

hymns, all these help little, and have little savour, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such a time there is no better remedy then patience, and the resigning of my self unto the will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a with-drawing of grace, or felt not a decrease of fervour. There was never Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated, who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a signe of ensuing comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. He that shall overcome, saith he, I will give him to eat of the tree of life.

8. But divine comfort is given, that a man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest we should wax proud of that good. The devil sleepeth not, neither is our flesh as yet dead. Therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel: for on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

## CHAP. X.

*Of thankfulness for the grace of God.*

**W**Hy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labour? Dispose thy self to patience, rather then to comfort: and to the bearing of the crosse, rather then to gladnesse. What secular person is there, that would not willingly receive spirituall joy and comfort, if he could alwayes have it? Spirituall comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and all the pleasures of the flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean: but spirituall delights are onely pleasant and honest, produced by virtues, and infused by God into pure hearts. But no man can alwayes enjoy these divine comforts according to his desire: for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedome of mind, and great trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving grace; but man doth evil in not returning it again wholly unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are ungratefull to the giver: and return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is  
thank-

thankfull: and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation that taketh from me compunction: nor that contemplation which breedeth a haughty mind. For all that is high is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor every desire pure; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is grateful to God. I do willingly accept of that grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and fearfull, and be made more ready and able to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof; will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather acknowledge himself poore and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own; that is, give thanks to God for his grace, and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but onely sinne and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Content thy self, and desire alwayes the meanest and lowest things, and the highest shall be given thee: for the highest stand not without the lowest. The highest Saints before God, are the least in their own judgments. And how much the more

glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and heavenly glory, are not desirous of the vain glory of this world. Those that are firmly settled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone: and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and alwayes tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore gratefull for the least gift, & thou shalt be made worthy to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest: and the most contemptible as an especiall gift. If thou consider the worth of the giver, no gift will seem little, or of mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the sovereign Majesty of God. Yea, if he should give punishment and stripes, it ought to be gratefull; for that he doeth is alwayes for our salvation, whatsoever he permiteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankfull for the grace given, & patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble lest he lose it.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

*How few the lovers of the Crosse of  
Christ are.*

**J**esus hath now many lovers of his heavenly kingdome, but few bearers of his Crosse. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, or with him. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of bread: but few to the drinking of the cup of his passion. Many reverence his miracles, few follow the ignominy of his Crosse. Many love Jesus as long as adversities happen not. Many praise and blesse him, as long as they receive any comfort from him. But if Jesus hide himself, and leave them but a while, they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jesus for Jesus, and not for some comfort of their own, blesse him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the greatest comfort. And although he should never give them comfort; they notwithstanding would ever prayse him, and alwayes give him thanks.

3. O how powerfull is the pure love of Jesus, which is mixed with no self-love nor proper interest! Are they not all to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves then of Christ, that alwayes think of their commoditie and gain? Where may one be found that will serve God, without looking for reward?

4. It is hard to find any one so spirituall, that is free from the love of all earthly things. For where is any that is indeed poore in spirit, and free from all affection of creatures? Farre hence, and from the end of the world is his place. If a man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should suffer much, yet is it little. And if he should attain to all knowledge, he is yet farre off. And if he should have great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is most necessarie for him. What is that? That leaving all, he forsake himself, and go perfectly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love. And when he hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much  
which

which might be much esteemed; but according to truth, let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants. They may be truly poore in spirit and naked, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poore: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leave himself and all things, and put himself in the meanest and lowest place.

## CHAP. XII.

*Of the high way of the holy Crosse.*

UNTo many seemeth hard this speech, Denie thy self, take up thy Crosse, and follow Jesus. But it will be much harder to hear that last word, Get ye away from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire. For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Crosse, shall not then fear to hear the sentence of everlasting damnation. This signe of the Crosse shall be in heaven, when our Lord shall come to judgement. Then all the servants of the Crosse, who in their life time conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto  
our

our Lord with great confidence.

2. Why therefore fearest thou to take up the Crosse, which leadeth thee to a Kingdome. In the Crosse is health, in the Crosse is life, in the Crosse is protection against our enemies, in the Crosse is infusion of heavenly sweetnesse, in the Crosse is strength of mind, in the Crosse is joy of spirit, in the Crosse is the height of virtue, in the Crosse is the perfection of sanctitie. There is no health of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Crosse. Take up therefore thy Crosse and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Crosse, and is dead for thee on the Crosse; that thou mayest also bear thy Crosse, and desire to die on the Crosse with him. For if thou dyest with him, thou shalt also live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou shalt be partaker with him also in glory.

3. Behold in the Crosse all doth consist, and all lyeth in ending our life upon it: for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Crosse, and of dayly mortification. Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, then the  
the



the way of the Holy Crosse. Dispose and order all things according to thy will and judgement: yet thou shalt ever find, that of necessitie thou must suffer some-what, either willingly or against thy will, so as thou shalt never fully avoid the Crosse. For either thou shalt feel pain in thy bodie, or in thy soul thou shalt suffer tribulation of spirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forsaken of God, sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours: and which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self: neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedie or comfort; but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to bear it. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou submit thy self wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath so lively a feeling of the passion of Christ, as he who hath chanced to suffer the like. The Crosse therefore is alwayes ready, and every where attendeth thee. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou flyest: for wheresoever thou goest, thou carriest thy self with thee, and shalt ever find thy self both above and below, without and within: which way soever thou dost turn  
thee,

96 *The Christians pattern,* Lib. II,  
thee, alwayes thou shalt find the  
Crosse: and every where of necessitie  
thou must have patience, if thou wilt  
have inward peace, and deserve an  
everlasting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Crosse willingly,  
it will bear thee; and lead thee  
to thy desired end: to wit, where  
there shall be an end of suffering,  
though here there shall not. If thou  
bear it unwillingly, thou makest for  
thy self a new burden and increasest  
thy load, & yet notwithstanding thou  
must bear it. If thou cast away one  
Crosse, without doubt thou shalt  
find another, and that perhaps a more  
heavy.

6. Thinkest thou to escape that  
which no man could ever avoid?  
which of the Saints in the world was  
without crosses, and tribulation? Ve-  
rily Jesus Christ our Lord was never  
one houre without pain of suffering,  
so long as he lived. Christ (saith he)  
ought to suffer, and rise again from  
death, and so to enter into his glory:  
and how dost thou seek any other  
way, then this high way, which is the  
way of the holy Crosse?

7. The whole life of Christ was a  
Crosse and Martyrdome: and dost  
thou seek rest and joy? Thou art de-  
ceived, thou art deceived, if thou  
seekest

seekest any other thing, then to suffer tribulation: for this whole mortall life is full of miseries, and environed on every side with crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit, so much the heavier crosses he oftentimes findeth: for the love he beareth to God increaseth the grief which he endureth for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though so many wayes afflicted, is not without the remedy of spirituall consolation, for the great good which he perceiveth to grow unto him by the bearing of his Crosse. For whilest he willingly putterh himself under it, all the burden of tribulation is turned into the confidence of divine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much the more is the spirit strengthened by inward grace. And sometimes he is so comforted with the desire of tribulation, and adversitie, for the love of conforming himself to the Crosse of Christ, that he would not wish at any time to be without sorrow and tribulation: because he believeth that so much the more gratefull he shall be unto God, how much the more he can suffer for him. This is not a work of humane virtue, but it is the grace  
 G of

of Christ, that can, and doth so much in frail flesh, that what naturally it alwayes abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervour of spirit, it taketh hold on and loveth.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to bear the Crosse, to love the Crosse, chastise and subdue the body, to flie honours, to suffer contumelies with a joyfull heart, to despise himself, and to wish to be despised, to bear all adversities, and damages, and to desire no prosperitie in this world. If thou considerest thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter thy self. But if thou trustest in our Lord, strength shall be given thee from heaven, and the world and flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and signed with the Crosse of Christ.

10. Resolve therefore with thy self, like a good and faithfull servant of Christ, to bear manfully the Crosse of thy Lord, who was crucified for thy love. Prepare thy self to bear many adversities & divers kinds of troubles in this miserable life: for so it will be with thee, wheresoever thou be, & so surely thou wilt find it, wheresoever thou hide thy self. So it must be, and  
there

there is no remedie or means to avoid tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the cup of our Lord willingly, if thou wilt be his friend, and desirest to have part with him. Leave the desire of comforts to God: let him do therein as shall best please him. Set thou thy heart upon the suffering of tribulations, and account them the greatest comforts: for that the passions of this life are not con-digne to future glory, although thou alone couldst suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seem sweet and pleasant unto thee for Christ: then thou maist think it is well with thee, for thou hast found a Paradise upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to suffer, & that thou desirest to flee it; so long shalt thou be ill at ease: and the tribulation thou flyest will follow thee every where.

12. If thou settlest thy self to that thou oughtest, to wit, to suffer, and to die to thy self, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou shalt find peace. Although thou shouldest have been rapt even unto the third heaven with S. Paal, thou art not for this assured, that thou shalt suffer no contradiction. I (saith Jesus) will shew him how great things he must suffer for

for my name. It resteth therefore, that thou suffer, if thou wilt love Jesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O, would to God, thou wert worthy to suffer something for Jesus! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification also to thy neighbour! For all do commend patience, though few desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ; since many suffer farre greater things for the love of the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dieth to himself; so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No man is fit to attain unto heavenly things, unless he submit himself to the bearing of adversities for Christ. Nothing is more gratefull unto God, nothing more wholesome to thee in this world, then to suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were in thy choice, thou shouldest rather wish to suffer adversities for Christ, then to enjoy the delight of many comforts: because by these means thou shouldest be more like unto Christ, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our good works, and the perfection of our estate consisteth

Ch. 12. or, *The following of Christ.* 101

sisteth not in much sweetnesse and comforts; but rather in suffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man then suffering, surely Christ would have shewed it by word, and example. But he plainly exhorted all the Disciples that followed him, and all that desire to follow him, to the bearing of the Crosse, and saith, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Crosse, and follow me. So as when we have read and searched all, let this be the last conclusion, That by many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdome of God.

G 3 THE

## THE THIRD BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the inward speech of Christ unto  
a faithfull soul.*



Will hear what our Lord God will speak in me. Blessed is the soul that heareth our Lord speaking in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort. Blessed are those eares that receive the sound of the divine voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the world. Blessed indeed are those eares that hearken not to the voice which soundeth outwardly, but unto truth which teacheth inwardly. Blessed indeed are the eyes that being shut up to outward things, are attentive to those things that are internall. Blessed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavour to prepare themselves more and more by dayly exercises to the attaining of heavenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to attend to the service of God, and cast from them all impediments of the world.

2. Consider these things, my soul, and shut up the doore of thy sensuall desires, that thou maist hear what thy



thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy Beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life. Keep thy self with me, and thou shalt find peace. Forsake all transitorie things and seek those that be everlasting. What are temporall things, but deceiving snares; and what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creatour? Forsake therefore all earthly things and labour to please thy Creatour, and be faithfull unto him, that thou maist attain unto true happinesse.

## CHAP. II.

*That much speaketh inwardly without  
noise of words.*

**S**peak Lord, for thy servant heareth: I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Stirre up my heart to heare the words of thy mouth. Let thy speech descend as the dew into my soul. The children of Israel in times past said unto Moyses, Speak thou unto us, and we shall hear thee: Let not our Lord speak unto us, lest perhaps we die. Not so Lord, not so, I beseech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, I humbly and earnestly intreat, Speak Lord, for thy

servant heareth. Let not Moses speak unto me, nor any of the Prophets, but thou rather speak, my Lord God, the inspirer and enlightner of all the Prophets: for thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They can pronounce words, but they give not spirit. They speak marvelous well, but if thou hold thy peace, they inflame not the heart. They deliver the letters, but thou openest the sense. They bring forth mysteries, but thou disclovest the understanding of sealed things. They declare thy commandments, but thou helpest to fulfill them. They shew the way, but thou givest strength to walk in it. They work onely exteriorly, but thou instructest and enlightnest the hearts. They water outwardly, but thou givest fruitfulness. They sound forth words, but thou givest understanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore Moses speak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the everlasting truth; lest perhaps I should die, and become without fruit, if I be warmed outwardly onely and not inflamed within; lest the word heard and not fulfilled, known and

Ch.3. or, *The following of Christ.* 105  
not loved, believed and not observed,  
should increase my judgement. Speak  
therefore Lord, for thy servant hear-  
eth, for thou hast the words of ever-  
lasting life. Speak unto me to the  
comfort of my soul and to the amend-  
ment of my whole life, and to thy  
praise and glory, and everlasting ho-  
nour.

### CHAP. III.

*That the words of God are to be heard  
with humility, and that many  
weigh them not.*

Sonne hear my words, words of  
great comfort, excelling all the  
knowledge of the Philosophers and  
wise men of this world. My words  
are spirit and life, not to be weighed  
by the understanding of man. They  
are not to be drawn to vain liking,  
but to be heard with silence, and to  
be received with all humility and  
great affection. And I said, Blessed  
is the man whom thou shalt in-  
struct, O Lord, and shalt teach  
thy law, that thou mayest give  
him quietnesse from evil dayes,  
and that he be not destroyed upon  
earth.

2. I (saith our Lord) have taught  
the

the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not continually to speak to every one: but many are deaf, and give no care to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the world, then to God: and follow sooner the desires of their flesh, then the will of God. The world promisseth temporall and small things, and is served with great diligence: I promise most high and eternall things, and the hearts of men are nothing moved with it. Who is he that serveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the world, and the Lords thereof are served? Blush Sidon, saith the sea. And if thou ask the cause, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend a long journey is undertaken; for everlasting life many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily: for a pennie sometimes there is great contention: for a vain thing and sleight promise, men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But ( alas ) for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore slothfull and complaining servant, that they  
are

Ch. 3. or, *The following of Christ.* 107

are found more readie to destruction, then thou to life. They rejoyce more at vanity, then thou at truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope: but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away emptie that trusteth in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfill that which I have said; but to him that remains faithfull in my love to the end. I am the reward of all good, and do trie my devout servants in forcible proofs.

4. Write my words in thy heart, and think diligently of them: for they will be necessarie in time of temptation. What thou understandest not when thou readeest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation. I am wont to visit my elect two severall wayes, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I dayly reade two lessons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increase of virtues. He that hath my words and despiseth them, hath within himself that shall judge him at the last day.

*A Prayer to implore the grace of  
devotion.*

5. O Lord my God, thou art all  
that

that I can desire. Who am I, that dare speak unto thee? I am thy poorest servant, and a most vile worm: much more poore and contemptible then I can or dare expresse. Remember Lord, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, just, and holy; thou canst do all things, performest all things, leaving onely a sinner void of all good. Call to mind thy mercies, & fill my heart with thy grace, who wilt not that thy works be void.

6. How can I support my self in this miserable life, unlesse thy mercy and grace comfort me? Turn not thy face from me: delay not thy visitation; draw not away thy comfort, lest my soul become as earth without water unto thee. Lord teach me to fulfill thy will; teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy sight; for thou art my wisdom, thou dost perfectly know me, and didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born into the world.

#### CHAP. IV.

*That we ought to live in truth and humility in the sight of God.*

**S**onne walk in my sight in sincerity and truth; and ever seek me in plainnesse

plainnesse of heart. He that walketh in my sight in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, and truth shall deliver him from seducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If truth shall have delivered thee, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for vain speeches of men. Lord, it is true. According as thou saist, so I beseech thee let it be done with me, and keep me, and bring me to a happy end. Let thy truth teach me, and let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love: and I shall walk with thee in great freedome of heart.

2. I will teach thee (saith the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sinnes with great sorrow, and grief, and never esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner, and subject to many passions. Of thy self thou alwayes tendest to nothing, and art quickly cast down and overcome, quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to humble, and despise thy self: for thou art much weaker then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And

3. And therefore let nothing seem much unto thee whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious, and wonderfull, nothing worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly commendable, and to be desired, but that which is everlasting. Let the eternall Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthinesse alwayes displease thee. Fear nothing, blame, & shie nothing so much as thy sinnes, and vices: which ought to displease more then the losse of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiositie and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high mysteries of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation. These oftentimes (for that I resist them) do fall into great temptation and sinnes, for their pride and curiositie.

4. Fear the judgements of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But discusse not the works of the Highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their devotion onely in books, some in pictures, some in outward signes and figures, some



Ch. 5. or, *The following of Christ.* III

Some have me in their mouthes, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their understanding and purged in their affection do alwayes aspire with an earnest mind to everlasting happinesse, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief: and these perceive what the Spirit of truth speaketh in them. Because it teacheth them to despise earthly, and love heavenly things: to neglect the world, and day and night to desire heaven.

CHAP. V.

*Of the wonderfull effect of divine grace.*

**I** Praise thee, O heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poore and wretched creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthie of all comfort. I ever blesse and glorifie thee with thy onely begotten Sonne, and the holy Ghost for all worlds. O God my Lord, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart,  
all

all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I have need to be comforted by thee: visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliver me from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections: that being cured within and well purged, I may be made fit to love, strong to suffer, and constant to persevere.

3. Love is a great matter, in very truth a great good; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light; and beareth equally unequall burdens. For it carrieth a burden without a burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, sweet and delightful. The noble love of Jesus inforceth man to work great things, and stirreth him up to desire alwayes the most perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any base thing. Love will be free from all worldly affection, to the end his inward sight be not obscured, that he be not entangled with the desire of any transitory gain, or troubled with the want thereof. Nothing is sweeter then love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing  
thing

thing more ample, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven or in earth: for that love hath his beginning from God, and cannot rest but in God above all creatures.

4. He that loveth, flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth, he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for that he resteth in one Highest above all, from which all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but inflameth above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawfull and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to effect: whereas he that doth not love, fainteth, and can do nothing.

5. Love alwayes watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not; being wearied is not tired; straightned, is not pressed; frighted, is not troubled: but like a lively flame & burning torch, breaketh upwards, and passeth through all with great security. If any one loveth, he knoweth what this voice cryeth, A loud cry in the cares of God, is the  
H
burning

burning love of the soul, which saith,  
My God, my love, thou art wholly  
mine, and I wholly thine.

6. Enlarge me in love, that my  
heart may tast how sweet it is to  
love, and to be dissolved, and swimme  
in thy love. Let me be possessed by  
love, mounting above my self, with  
excessive fervour and admiration. Let  
me sing the song of love, let me fol-  
low thee on high my beloved; let my  
soul faint in thy praise rejoycing with  
love. Let me love thee more then my  
self, and not my self but for thee, and  
all in thee that truly love thee, as the  
law of love commandeth which shin-  
neth in thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, pious, sweet  
and delightfull, strong, patient, faith-  
full, prudent, suffering, full of cou-  
rage, and never seeking it self. For  
where one seeketh himself, there he  
falleth from love. Love is circumspect,  
humble, and upright: not remissie, not  
mutable, nor attending unto vain  
things; sober, chaste, constant, quiet,  
and guarded in all the senses. Love is  
subject and obedient to Superiours,  
mean and abject to it self, devout and  
thankfull unto God, trusting and ho-  
ping alwayes in him, even then when  
God imparteth no sweetnesse unto it:  
for without sorrow none liveth in  
love.

8. He

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things, and stand to the will of his beloved, is not worthy to be called a lover. A lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distastfull for his beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the proof of a true Lover.*

Sonne, thou art not yet a strong and prudent lover. Wherefore Lord? Because thou givest over for a small adversity, and too earnestly seekest comfort. A constant lover standeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty persuasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so I am not unpleasant to him in adversity.

2. A prudent lover considereth not so much the gift of his lover, as the love of the giver. He rather esteemeth the good will then the value, and placeth all gifts under his beloved. A noble lover resteth not in the gift, but in me above any gift. All therefore is not lost if sometimes thou hast lesse tast of me then thou wouldest. That good and sweet desire which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present grace, and a certain tast of the

H 2      heavenly

heavenly Countrey, whereon thou must not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh. But to fight against evil motions of the mind which may happen unto thee, and to despise the suggestion of the devil, is a signe of virtue and great courage.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee of any matter whatsoever, trouble thee. Retain a firm purpose and an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, then commit them: and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is a gain and no losse.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good; and to divert thee from all devout exercise: to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sinnes, from the guard of thine own heart, and from the firm purpose of profiting in virtue. He thrusteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cause a wearisomnesse and horreur in thee, to draw thee from devout prayer and reading. Humble confession

displeasing unto him ; and if he could, he would cause thee to cease from receiving the Sacrament of my body. Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it when he suggesteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto him, Avant filthy spirit, blush miserable wretch; thou art filthy that bringest such things unto mine eares. Away from me wicked deceiver , thou shalt have no part in me: but Jesus shall be with me as a strong warriour, & thou shalt remain confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment then to consent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent ; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldest work me many troubles. My Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear ? If whole armies should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. Our Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier : and if thou sometimes fall through frailty, recover greater forces then before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and pride. This brings many into error, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable

blindnesse. Let the fall of the proud, foolishly presuming of themselves, serve thee for a warning, and a perpetuall humiliation.

# CHAP. VII.

*That grace is to be hid under the veil of humility.*

Sonne, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extoll thy self, nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof: but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed into the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without. Neither doth therein onely consist the profit of spirituall life, when thou hast the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, resignedly, and patiently sufferest the withdrawing thereof: so that thou be not then lesse diligent in the exercise of prayer nor suffer thy self to passe over the rest of thy accustomed duties; but that thou willingly perform what lyeth in thee, according as thou art able and understandest to be fit: not neglecting thy self wholly for the dry-

ness



Ch. 7. or, *The following of Christ.* 119  
nesse and trouble of mind which thou  
feelest.

2. There are many that when it  
succeedeth not well with them, pre-  
sently they become impatient or  
slothfull. The way of man is not al-  
wayes in his power, but it belongeth  
to God to give and to comfort when  
he will, how much he will, & whom  
he will, as it shall please him and no  
more. Some unadvised persons have  
overthrown themselves for the greedy  
desire which they had of the grace of  
devotions attempting more then they  
were able to perform, not weighing  
the measure of their weaknesse, but  
following rather the desire of their  
heart, then the judgement of reason.  
And because they presumed on great-  
er matters then were pleasing to God,  
they quickly lost his grace. They  
were made needy, and left in a deject-  
ed estate that built themselves nests  
in heaven: to the end that being hum-  
bled & impoverished, they may learn  
not to flie with their own wings, but  
to live in hope under my feathers.  
They that are yet new, and unac-  
quainted in the way of our Lord, un-  
lesse they govern themselves by the  
counsel of discreet persons, may  
easily be deceived and quickly over-  
thrown.

H 4

3. And

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgement, then give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn from their own conceit. Seldome those that are wise in their own opinion suffer themselves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledge with humility, and a slender understanding, is better then great treasures of learning with a self-liking. It is better for thee to have lesse, then much of that whereof thou mayest be proud. He doth not discreetly, that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former povertie, and the chaste fear of God; which feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuously wise, that in time of adversitie or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts, and thinketh and imagineth of me lesse confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of warre too dejected and fearfull. If thou couldest alwayes continue humble, and lowly within thy self, and temper, and govern thy soul well, thou shouldest not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good  
counsell,

Ch. 8. or, *The following of Christ.* 121  
counsel, that when thou conceivest  
fervour of spirit, thou shouldest think  
what will become of thee, when that  
light shall leave thee. And when that  
doth happen, remember the light  
may return again, which for thy in-  
struction and my glory I have with-  
drawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profi-  
table, then if thou shouldest alwayes  
enjoy prosperity according to thy de-  
sire. For merits are not to be weigh-  
ed in a man by the number of visions  
and comforts which he hath, or by  
his knowledge in Scripture, or by  
his being placed in high degree, but  
in that he is grounded in true humili-  
ty, and replenished with divine cha-  
ritie; if he alwayes purely and en-  
tirely seek the honour of God, if he  
esteem himself nothing, and with a  
sincere heart despise himself, and re-  
joyce more to be despised and hum-  
bled by others, then to be honoured.

#### CHAP. VIII.

*Of a mean conceit of our selves in  
the sight of God.*

Shall I speak unto my Lord, sith I  
am dust and ashes? If I esteem  
better of my self, behold thou stand-  
est against me, and my iniquities bear  
true witness: neither can I speak  
against

against it. But if I abase, and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self conceit, and ( as I am ) account my self to be dust, thy grace will be favourable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart, and all estimation how little soever shall be swallowed up in the depth of my nothing, and perish everlastingly. There thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come : for alas I am nothing, and I knew it not. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing, and a masse of infirmitie. But if thou suddenly look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvell, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously imbraced by thee, that of mine own weight, alwayes sink downward.

2. Thy love is cause hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and ( as I may truly say ) delivering me from innumerable evils. For surely by evil loving my self, I lost my self: and by seeking thee alone, and sincerely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee, and for thy love have more deeply brought my self

to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Jesu, dealest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of all good, yet the noblenesse of thy bountie and thy infinite goodnesse never ceaseth to do good even to the ungratefull, and to them that be turned away farre from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be gratefull, humble, and devout: for thou art our safetie, our power, and our strength.

#### CHAP. IX.

*That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.*

S<sup>o</sup>ane, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desire to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self, and unto creatures. For if in any thing thou seek thy self, thou presently faintest, and dryest up within thy self. Direct therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the highest good; and therefore all things are  
to

to be reduced unto me as unto their first beginning.

2. Out of me, as out of living fountains, the little and the great, the poore and the rich, do draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many wayes hindred and straitned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe no good unto thy self, nor attribute the praise of virtue unto any man: but give all unto God, without whom man hath nothing. I have bestowed all, and will that all be returned to me again: and with great severitie I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain glory. And if heavenly grace, and true charitie enter in, there shall be no envie nor grudging of heart, neither shall there be any place for self-love. For divine charitie overcometh all, and enlargeth all the forces of the soul. If thou understand aright, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised above all things, and to be blessed in all.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

*That despising the world, it is sweet  
to serve God.*

NOW I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent. I will say in the cares of my God, my Lord, and my King that is on high, O how great is the multitude of thy sweetnesse, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for those that fear thee! But what art thou to them that love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truly unspeakable is the sweetnesse of thy contemplation, which thou bestowest on them that love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetnesse of thy charitie, for that when I was not thou madest me: and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee, & hast commanded me to love thee.

2. O fountain of everlasting love, what shall I say of thee? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to remember me, even when I withered away and perished! Thou hast used mercie with thy servant beyond all the expectation of my heart: and hast bestowed thy grace and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I return unto thee for this grace?  
For

For it is not granted to every one to forsake all things, to renounce the world, and to undertake a life of religion and perfection. Is it much that I serve thee, whom all creatures are bound to serve? It ought not to seem much unto me to serve thee: but this rather seemeth much and marvelous unto me, that thou vouchsafest to receive into thy service one so poore and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved servants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I serve thee. And yet in very deed thou rather servest me then I thee. Behold, heaven and earth which thou hast created for the service of man are ready at hand, and do daily perform whatsoever thou dost command; and this is little: yea, thou hast also appointed the Angels to the service of man. But that which excelleth all, is, that thou thy self hast vouchsafed to serve man, and promised to give thy self unto him.

4. What shall I give thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able at least for one day, to do thee some worthy and acceptable service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honour and everlasting praise. Thou art my  
Lord,



Lord, and I thy poore servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my forces, neither ought I ever to cease to praise thee. And this I wish to do, this I desire: and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is a great honour, a very great glory to serve thee, and despise all things for thee. For great grace shall be given to them that shall willingly subject themselves to thy most holy service. They shall receive most sweet comfort of the holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnall delights. They shall attain great freedom of mind, that for thy names sake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall have left off all care of this world.

6. O sweet and delightfull servitude of God, by which man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious bondage, which maketh man equall to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to devils, gratefull and of great esteem to all the faithfull! O service to be imbraced, and alwayes wished for, by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end.

## CHAP. XI.

*That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.*

Sonne, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not yet well learned; What are those, Lord? That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure; and be not a lover of thy self, but a diligent follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes do stirre thee up, and drive thee forwards with violence: but consider whether thou art moved rather for my honour, then for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain: but if there lurk in thee any self-inclination, behold this is it that hindereth thee, and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou incline not too much upon any desire that cometh to thy mind, before thou ask my counsel, lest perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed: nor every contrary affection at the first to be fled. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint:  
even

even in good desires and endeavours, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of mind, and by evil example become a scandall unto others; or being gainsaid by others, thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensuall appetites, and respect not what thy body would, or would not; but rather to labour that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, untill it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with ordinary things, and not to murmur against any inconvenience.

## CHAP. XII.

*Of the effect of Patience, and of strife against concupiscence.*

**L**ord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me: for that many adversities do happen in this life. Howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction. So it is, Sonne. And my will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptation, or that which feeleth no contrariety;

riety ; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire of hell ? Of two evils the lesse is alwayes to be chosen. That thou mayst therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next world, endeavour to suffer patiently for God the present evils of this. Dost thou think that men of this world suffer little or nothing ? Thou art deceived. Look into the life even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say, They have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their tribulations. Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will ; but how long dost thou think it will last ?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this world vanish away like smoke, and there shall be no memorie of their joves past. Yea, even while they live also, they rest not in them without grief, irksomnesse, and fear. For the self-same thing in which they take their delight is oftentimes the cause of sorrow unto them and much affliction. They have their desert, wrote  
for

Ch. 12. or, *The following of Christ.* 131

for that they immoderately seek and follow delights, they do not obtain them but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and deceitfull, how inordinate and filthy are those pleasures! Yea, so senselesse and blind are men that they understand it not: but like dumbe beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the eternall death of their soui. Do not thou therefore, my Son, follow the disordinate inclinations of thy corrupt nature, but forsake thine own will. Delight in our Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.

5. If thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me: behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessings, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdrawest thy self from all comfort of creatures, so much the sweeter and more forcible consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without a certain grief, labour, and strife. The old custome will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custome that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with

fervour of spirit. The old serpent will sting and trouble thee : but by prayer he shall be put to flight, and with profitable labour thou shalt shut the doore against him.

## CHAP. XIII.

*Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.*

**S**onne, he that endeavoureth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh to have things in private, shall lose the common. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superiour, it is a signe that his flesh is not perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes rebelleth and murmureth against him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thine own passions. For the outward enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward man be in good estate. There is no worse enemy, nor more troublesome to the soul, then thou unto thy self, not agreeing well with the spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and bloud.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid

afraid to resigne thy self wholly to the will of others. But what great matter is it, if thou that art dust and nothing submit thy self to a man for God, when I the Almighty & highest Sovereigne who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto man for thee? I became the most humble & abject of all men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey thou that art dust. Learn to humble thy self thou earth and clay, and put thy self under the feet of all men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thy self to all subjection.

3. Take courage against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: but humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the streets under their feet. Vain man, what canst thou complain of? what canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved hell? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy soul was precious in my sight: that thou mightest know my love and alwayes remain gratefull for my benefits: that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

## CHAP. XIV.

*Of the secret judgements of God to be considered, lest we be extolled in our good deeds.*

**T**Hou thunderest thy judgements over me, O Lord, and shakest all my bones with fear and trembling: my soul is fore afraid. I stand astonished, when I consider that the heavens are not pure in thy sight. If thou hast found wickednesse in Angels, and hast not pardoned them, what shall become of me? Starres fell from heaven, and what do I presume that am dust? They whose works seemed laudable, fell into the lowest hell: and I have seen them, that did eat bread of Angels, to be delighted with the husks of swine.

2. There is no sanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdrawest thy hand. No wisdom availeth, if thou ceaseest to govern. No strength helpeth, if thou leavest to defend. No chastitie secure, if thou doest not protect it. No custodie of our own profitable, if thy sacred watchfulnesse be not present. For if thou leavest us, we sink, and perish: but if thou vouchsafest to visit us, we are raised up, and do enjoy life. We are inconstant, but by thee we are strengthened: we wax cold,  
but



but by thee we receive heat.

3. O how meanly and basely ought I to think of my self! how little, yea nothing ought I to esteem it, if I seem to have any good! O Lord, how ought I to submit my self under thy unsearchable Judgements: where I find my self to be nothing else, but nothing, and lesse then nothing. O unmeasurable weight! O sea that can never be passed over, where I find my self onely and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking-hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain glory is swallowed up in the depth of thy judgements, which hang over my head.

4. What is all flesh in thy sight? Shall clay glory against him that framed it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whose heart is truly subject to God? All the world cannot move him to any elation of mind, whom truth hath subjected unto it; neither shall he be moved with the tongues of all his praisers, that hath settled his whole hope in God. For they also that speak, behold, are nothing: they shall passe away with the sound of the words: but the truth of our Lord remaineth for ever.

## CHAP. XV.

*What we ought to do, and say in every thing which we desire.*

**S**onne, say thus in every thing, Lord if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort, Lord if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name, Lord if thou seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may use this unto thine honour. But if thou knowest it will be hurtfull unto me, and not profitable to the health of my soul, take from me all such desire. For every desire proceedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seem unto man right and good. It is hard to judge whether a good spirit, or the contrary drive thee to desire this or that: or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good spirit.

2. Alwayes therefore, whatsoever occurreth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired with the fear of God, and humilitie of heart: and above all thou oughtest to commit it unto me with full resignation of thy self: and thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, do this,  
or

or that, as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knowest, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy servant, readie to obey thee in all things: for I desire not to live unto my self, but unto thee: and would to God it might be in some worthie and perfect manner.

*A Prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.*

3. Grant me thy grace sweet Jesus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and persevere with me untill the end. Grant me alwayes to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine; and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and will be all one with thine: and not to be able to will, or refuse any thing else, but what thou wilt, or rejectest.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to

love to be contemned for thy sake, and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and make my heart to enjoy peace in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the onely rest: out of thee all things are troublesome and unquiet. In this peace, in the self same, that is, in thee, one chiefest eternall Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

## CHAP. XVI.

*That true comfort is to be sought in  
God alone.*

WHATSOEVER I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it in this life, but hereafter. For if I should alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delight thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poore, and the receiver of the humble. Expect a while, my soul, expect the divine promise, and thou shalt have abundane of all good things in heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt  
lose

lose the celestiaall and eternall. Have temporall things in use, and the eternall in desire. Thou canst not be filled with any temporall goods, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou enjoyest all that is created, yet canst thou not be happy thereby nor blessed: but in God that hath created all things, thy whole beatitude and happinesse consisteth; not such as is seen, and commended by the foolish lovers of the world, but such as the good and faithfull servants of Christ expect, and the spirituall and clean of heart, whose conversation is in heaven, sometimes take a tast of. Vain and short is all humane comfort. Blessed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from truth. A devout man every where carrieth with him Jesus his comforter, and saith unto him, Be present with me Lord Jesus in every place, and time. Let this be my comfort to be alwayes willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and just proof be unto me as the greatest comfort: for thou wilt not be angry alwayes, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVII.

*That all our care is to be placed in God.*

**S**onne, suffer me to do with thee what I please. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as man; thou judgest in many things as humane affection perswadeth thee. Lord, what thou sayest is true. Thy solicitude for me is greater then all the care that I can take for my self. For he standeth at too great a hazard, that casteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord, so that my will may remain right and firm in thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please thee. For it cannot be but good whatsoever thou doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should be in darknesse, be thou blessed: and if it be thy will I should be in light, be thou again blessed. If thou vouchsafest to comfort me, be thou blessed: and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou also ever blessed. Sonne, so thou oughtest to be as ready to suffer, as to receive joy. Thou oughtest to be as willing to be poore and needy, as plentiful and rich.

3. Lord, I will willingly suffer for thee, whatsoever thy pleasure is shall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, sweet  
and

Ch. 18. or, *The following of Christ.* 141

and lowre, delightfull and sorrowfull;  
and give thee thanks for all that hap-  
peneth unto me. Keep me from all  
sinne, and I will neither fear death  
nor hell: so as thou dost not for ever  
cast me from thee, and blot me out of  
the book of life, what tribulation so-  
ever befall me shall not hurt me.

### CHAP. XVIII.

*That temporall miseries, by the example  
of Christ, must be borne pa-  
tiently.*

Sonne, I descended from Heaven  
for thy health: I took upon me thy  
miseries, my charity and not any ne-  
cessity drawing me thereunto, that  
thou mightest learn patience, and  
not refuse to bear temporall miseries.  
For from the houre of my birth, untill  
my death on the crosse, I was not  
without suffering of grief. I suffered  
great want of temporall things: I of-  
ten heard many complaints against  
me: I bare patiently shame and re-  
proches: for benefits I received in-  
gratitude; for miracles blasphemies;  
for heavenly doctrine reprehensi-  
ons.

2. Lord, for that thou wert pati-  
ent in thy life time, chiefly in fulfil-  
ling the commandment of thy Fa-  
ther,

ther, it is reason that I miserable sinner should have patience in all things according to thy will, and for mine own health bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensome, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very easie, and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also then it was in times past in the old Law, when the gate of heaven remained shut, and the way also to heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdome. Neither they also that then were just, and were ordained to be saved, could enter into the heavenly glory, but by thy meritorious death & glorious Passion on the Crosse, which was not yet exhibited.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew unto me, and to all faithfull souls a direct and most sure way to thy everlasting Kingdome! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our crown. If thou hadst not gone before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow thee? Alas! how many would stay behind



Ch. 19. or, *The following of Christ.* 143  
behind, and remain farre off, if they  
beheld not thy excellent examples!  
Behold we are yet cold although we  
have heard of so many of thy won-  
ders, and thy heavenly documents!  
what would become of us if we had  
not so great light to follow thee?

## CHAP. XIX.

*Of suffering of injuries: and who is  
proved to be truly patient.*

**W**Hat is it thou sayest, Sonne?  
Cease to complain, considering  
my passion, & that of my other Saints.  
Thou hast not yet made resistance to  
the shedding of blood. It is but little  
thou sufferest, in comparison of them  
that have suffered so much, so strong-  
ly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so  
many wayes tried and exercised. Thou  
oughtest therefore to call to mind  
the heavy sufferings of others, that  
thou mayest the easier bear the little  
adversities which thou sufferest. And  
if they seem not little, beware lest  
thy impatience be cause thereof. Yet  
whether they be little or great, endea-  
vour to bear all patiently.

2. How much the better thou dis-  
posest thy self to suffering, so much  
the more wisely thou dost, & so much  
the more favour doest thou procure:  
thou

thou shalt more easily also endure it, if thy mind be prepared, and thy self accustomed thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things of such an one, at the hands of such a person; nor, such things are not to be suffered by me, for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with those things which I never thought of: but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned, but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But he that is indeed patient, mindeth not by whom he is exercised; whether by his Superiours, or some of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a perverse & unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversitie happeneth unto him, he taketh all thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain: for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, can be without reward.

4. He

4. Be thou therefore alwayes prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have thy victory. Without combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refestest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently: without labour there is no coming to rest, nor without fight can the victory be obtained. Lord let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversitie ariseth. Let all exercise of tribulation be made pleasing unto me, and be welcome for thy name: for to suffer and to be troubled for thee, is very profitable for my soul.

# CHAP. XX.

*Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities: and of the miseries of this life.*

I will confesse against me my injustice: I will confesse unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that discomfirteth, and grieveth me. I purpose to resist with courage, but when a small temptation

ptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whilest I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it, I find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold therefore, Lord, my weaknesse & frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me & deliver me out of the mire of my infirmities, that I stick not fast therein: Let me not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes beareth me back, & confounds me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And although I do not altogether consent, yet their continuall assaults are troublesome and grievous unto me: and it is tedious and a very irksome thing to live thus daily in strife. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do alwayes much more easily enter in upon me, then they can be cast out again.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithfull souls, let it please thee to consider the labour and sorrow of thy servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with heavenly  
force

force, lest my old man, my miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand, against which I ought to fight as long as I breathe in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where ail is set with snares, and compassed with enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another cometh, yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be loved that hath so many afflictions, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed that it is deceitfull and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the inclinations of our flesh do too much over-rule us. Some things draw us to love it, others to contemne it. To the love of the world, the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us; but the pains and miseries that do justly follow them, cause a hatred and loathsomenesse thereof.

5. But alas ! wicked pleasure overcometh the mind which is given over to the world ; and she esteemeth it a delight to be under thorns, because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetnesse of God, and the inward delight of virtue. But they that perfectly contemne the world, and endeavour to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetnesse promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many wayes deceived.

## CHAP. XXI.

*That we are to rest in God above all his gifts.*

**A**Bove all things, and in all things, my soul, thou shalt ever rest in God, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, most sweet and loving Jesu, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honour, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and learning, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladnesse, above all fame and praise, above all sweetnesse and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all  
desert

desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth & jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel: lastly, above Angels and Archangels, and above all the heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, surpasses all; thou alone most high, thou alone most powerfull, thou alone most full and sufficient, thou alone most sweet and comfortable, thou alone most beautifull and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and shall be: and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promistest whilest thou art not seen, and not fully obtained: for surely my heart cannot rest nor be fully contented unlesse it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Spouse Christ Jesus, the most chaste lover, the governour of all creatures, who will give me wings of true liberty to flie & rest in thee: O when shall it be fully

granted me to consider in quietnesse of mind, and see how sweet thou art my Lord God ! When shall I fully recollect my self in thee, that for thy love I may not feel my self, but thee alone, above all sense and feeling, in a manner not known unto all. But now I oftentimes lament and bear my infelicity with grief. For that many evils abound in this vale of miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overwhelm me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me, to the end I should not have free access unto thee, and that I should not enjoy thy sweet and heavenly embracings, which thou alwayes givest to the blessed and celestiall spirits. Let my sighs and manifold desolations on earth move thee.

4. O Jesus, brightnesse of eternall glory, and comfort of the pilgrime-soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come ? Let him come unto me his poore servant and make me glad. Let him put out his hand to deliver me miserable wretch from all anguish. Come, come blessed Lord; for without thee I shall have no joyfull day nor houre. Thou art my joy, & without thee there is nothing but want.



A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned, and loaden with irons, untill thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and givest me libertie, and shewest a favourable countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please in stead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth, nor shall delight me, but thou onely my God, my hope, my everlasting health. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, untill thy grace return again, and thou speak inwardly unto me. Behold I am here: behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy tears, and the desire of thy soul, thy humilitie, and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee. And I said, Lord I have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being readie to forsake all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou therefore, O Lord, that hast shewed this goodnesse to thy servant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy servant more to say before thee, but that he do greatly humble himself in thy sight, alwayes mindfull of his own iniquity, and basenesse? For there is none like

unto thee in all whatsoever is wonderfull in heaven and earth. Thy words are good, thy judgements true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praise therefore and glorie be unto thee, O wisdom of the eternall Father: let my tongue, my soul, and all creatures together praise and blesse thee.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of the remembrance of the manifold  
benefits of God.*

**O**pen, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to understand thy will, and to remember thy benefits, as well in generall, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration: that hence forward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confesse, that I am not able to give thee due thanks, for the favours which thou bestowest upon me, even in the least moment. I am lesse then the least of all thy mercies: and when I consider the excellencie of thy Majestic, the greatnesse thereof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our soul and body, and whatsoever we possesse outwardly

wardly or inwardly, naturally or spiritually, are thy benefits, and do praise thee, as bountifull, pious, and good, from whom we have received all that is good. Although one have received more, another lesse, all notwithstanding are thine, and without thee even the least cannot be had. He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his own desert, nor extoll himself above others, nor insult over the lesser: for he is greater & better that ascribeth least unto himself, and is more humble and devout in rendring thanks. And he that esteemeth himself basest of all men, and judgeth himself most unworthy, is fittest to receive greater blessings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be sory nor bear it impatiently, nor envie them that are enriched with greater store, but attend rather unto thee, and chiefly praise thy goodnesse, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifullly, so freely, and so willingly without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one; and why this man hath lesse, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to determine: who dost weigh in just measure the actions of every one.

4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteem it as a great mercie, not to have much, whereby outwardly and before men I might seem worthy of praise and glory: so that he, who considereth his own povertie, and basenesse, ought not therefore to conceive grief or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou, O God, hast chosen the poore and humble, and the despised of this world for thy self, and for thy familiar and domesticall friends. Witnesses are thy Apostles themselves, whom thou hast appointed Princes over all the earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, so mean to the eyes of men, without all malice and deceit, that they rejoyced to receive reproch for thy name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee, and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as the accomplishment of thy will in himself, and the pleasure of thy eternall appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest:  
and

and as peaceable and content in the last as in the first place: and as willing to be despised and contemned, and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honour before all others, and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and please him better, then all the benefits which he hath received, or can desire.

## CHAP. XXII.

*Of foure things that bring much peace.*

**S**onne, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true libertie. Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou saist, for I shall be very glad to heare it. Endeavour my Sonne to do rather the will of another, then thine own. Ever choose rather to have lesse then more. Alwayes seek the lowest place, and to be inferiour to every one. Wish alwayes, and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled in thee. Behold such a man entresth into the limits of peace, and most quiet rest.

2. Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense, and abundant in fruit. For if it could exactly  
be

be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the good and profit of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy words, and perfect mine own health.

*A prayer against evil thoughts.*

3. My Lord God, be not farre from me; my God have regard to help me: For sundrie thoughts have risen up against me, and great fears, afflicting my soul. How shall I passe through them without hurt? How shall I break through them without danger? I, saith he, will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth. I will open the doores of the prison, and reveal unto thee hidden secrets. Do Lord as thou sayest, and let all my evil thoughts flie from before thy face. This is my hope, my onely comfort, to flie unto thee in all tribulation, to trust in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

*A prayer for enlightning of the mind.*

4 Enlighten me, good Jesu, with the clearenesse of inward light, and expell all darknesse from my heart. Represse the many wandering thoughts, and bear down the fury of the temptations which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish the evil beast, that is, the alluring concupiscences, that peace may be made by thy virtue, and abundance of thy praise sound in thy holy Court, which is a pure conscience. Command the winds and tempests: say unto the sea, Be still: and to the north wind, Blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth: for I am emptie and unprofitable earth, untill thou impartest thy light unto me. Poure out thy grace from above, wash my heart with heavenly dew, give waters of devotion, to wash the face of the earth, to bring forth good and perfect fruit. Lift up my mind over-charged with the weight of Sinne: draw up my whole desire to heavenly treasures, that having tasted the sweetnesse of celestiall happinesse, it may loath to think of earthly vanities.

6. Take

6. Take me violently to thee, and deliver me from all unstable comfort of creatures: for no created thing can fully quiet and satisfie my desire. Joyn me unto thee with an unspeakable band of love: for thou onely fillest the mind of him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

## CHAP. XXIV.

*Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.*

Sonne, be not curious: trouble not thy self with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that man be such or no, or whether this man do, or speak this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one what he is, and do see all things that are under the sunne: and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinketh, what he would, and at what his intention aimeth. All things therefore are to be committed unto me: but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and suffer the unquiet to do as they will. Whatsoever



ever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Desire not too great fame in this world, nor to be known to many, nor to have the private love of men: for these things breed distractions, and cause great darknesse of heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the doore of thy heart unto me. Be carefull and watch in prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

## CHAP. XXV.

*Wherein the firm peace of the heart,  
and true profit consisteth.*

Sonne, I have said, Peace I leave to you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, do I give to you. All do desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble, and meek of heart. Thy peace shall be in much patience. If thou wilt heare me and follow my voice thou maist enjoy much peace. What then shall I do Lords? In every thing attend unto thy self what thou doest, and what thou sayest:  
and

and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou maist please me alone, and desire or seek nothing out of me. Of the sayings and doings of others, judge nothing rashly: neither do thou intangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: and doing thus, it may be thou shalt be little or seldom troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all, nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the state of this life, but of everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow, nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary, nor that it is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or imagine thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great devotion, and sweetness: for in these things a true lover of virtue is not tried; neither doth the profit and perfection of man consist in having them.

3. Wherein then Lords? In offering thy self from the very bottom of thy heart unto the will of God, not seeking thine own interest, or commodities, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever, so that with equall countenance, thou mayest persist

Ch. 26. or, *The following of Christ.* 161

sist in thanksgiving, both in prosperitie and in adversitie, weighing all things with an equall ballance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou prepare thy heart to suffer greater matters, and not justifie thy self, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these, and so great afflictions, but justifie me in whatsoever I appoint, and praise my holy name; then thou walkest in the true & right way of peace: and thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as thy banishment may permit.

#### CHAP: XXVI.

*Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble prayer better deserves than reading.*

**L**Ord, it is the work of a perfect man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to passe without care through many cares: not faintingly, but with a certain privilege of a free mind, adhering by inordinate affection to no creature.

2. I beseech thee most mercifull God, preserve me from the cares of this life, lest I should be too much intangled thereby : and from the many necessities of the body, lest I should be enthralled by pleasure : from all hindrances of the soul, lest broken with troubles I should be dejected and dismayed. I mean not from those things that worldly vanitie so greatly desireth : but from those miseries, that as punishments, do weigh down and hinder the soul of thy servant, with the generall curse of mortality, that it cannot enter into libertie of spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the unspeakable sweetnesse, make bitter unto me all carnall comfort, which may draw me away from the love of everlasting happinesse, and wickedly allure me to it self with the force of certain present delight. Let not flesh and b'oud overcome me; O Lord. Let not the world and the short glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his subtrill fraud supplant me. Give me force to resist, patience to suffer, and constancie to persevere. Give me in stead of all the comforts of the world the most sweet unction of thy spirit, and in lieu of carnall love, poure into my soul the love of thy name.

4. Behold,

4. Behold, meat, drink, clothes, and other necessities for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome unto a fervent spirit. Grant me to affect such nourishments in due measure, and not to be intangled with an over great desire of them. It is not lawfull to renounce them wholly, for that nature is to be sustained: but to desire superfluities, and those things that do rather delight then sustain, the law of God forbiddeth: for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

*That private love most hindreth from  
the chiefest Good.*

Sonne, thou oughtest to give all for Christ, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know that the love of thy self doth hurt thee more then any thing in the world. According to the love, and affection thou bearest them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or lesse. If thy love be pure, simple, and well ordered, thou shalt be free from bondage. Cover not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have that which may hin-

der thee and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is a wonderfull thing that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottome of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire, or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why tirest thou thy mind with needlesse cares? Resigne thy self to me, and thou shalt feel no losse at all. If thou seekest this or that, and wouldest be here or there, to enjoy thine own commoditie and pleasure; thou shalt never be in quiet, nor free from trouble of mind: for in every thing, somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will crosse thee.

3. Not every externall thing therefore attained, and heaped together helpeth thee: but it rather availeth if thou despise it, and dost root it out from thy heart; which thou must not understand onely of thy revenues and wealth, but of the desire of honour also, and vain praise; all which do passe away with this fading world. The place availeth little, if the spirit of fervour be wanting: neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy heart be destitute of a true foundation: that  
is,

Ch. 27. or, *The following of Christ.* 165  
is, unlesse thou persist in me, thou  
maist change, but not better thy self.  
For when occasion doth happen, thou  
shalt find that which thou soughtest  
to flie, and perhaps more.

*A prayer for cleansing the heart, and  
obtaining of heavenly wisdom.*

4. Confirm me O Lord with the  
grace of thy holy spirit. Give me  
force to strengthen my inward man,  
and to purge my heart from all un-  
profitable care, and grief; not to be  
drawn away with sundrie desires of  
any thing either little or great, but  
to consider all things, how they are  
transitorie, and do quickly fade, and  
that my self do also passe away to-  
gether with them: for nothing is  
permanent under the sunne, where  
all things are vanitie, and affliction of  
mind. O how wise is he that so con-  
sidereth them!

5. Grant me, Lord, heavenly wis-  
dome, that I may learn above all  
things to seek and find thee, above all  
things to delight in thee, and to love  
thee, and to think of all created  
things as they are, according to the  
disposition of thy wisdom. Grant  
me prudently to avoid him that flat-  
tereth me, and to suffer patiently him

that contradisteth me. It is great wisdom not to be moved with every blast of words: not to give care to dangerous flatterie: for so we shall go on securely in the way which we have begun.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

*Against the tongue of Slanders.*

Sonne, be not grieved if some think evil of thee, and speak that which thou dost not willingly heare. Thou oughtest to judge the worst of thy self and to think no man weaker then thy self. If thou walk spiritually thou wilt not much esteem of flying words. It is not small wisdom to be silent in time of evil, and inwardly to turn to mee, and not to be troubled with the judgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they judge well or evil, thou art nevertheless alwayes the same. Where is true peace, and true glorie? Is it not in mee? And he that coveteth not to please men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquiet of heart and distraction of the senses.

CHAP.



CHAP. XXIX.

*How we ought to call upon God, and  
blisse him when tribulation  
draweth near.*

Blessed ( O Lord ) be thy name for  
Ever ; since it pleaseth thee that  
this temptation & tribulation should  
fall upon me. I cannot flie it, but have  
need to flie to thee, that thou maist  
help me , and turn it to my good.  
Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not  
well with me , I am much troubled  
with this present grief. And now,  
dear Father, what shall I say? I am  
taken in narrow straits, save me in  
this houre. Yea therefore came I in-  
to this heure, that thou maist be glo-  
rified, when I shall be greatly hum-  
bled, and by thee delivered. Let it  
please thee Lord to deliver me : for,  
poore wretch that I am, what can I  
do, and whither shall I go without  
thee ? Grant patience Lord, even this  
time also. Help me my God, and then  
I will not fear how much soever I be  
oppressed.

2. And now in this, what shall I  
say? Lord , thy will be done, I have  
well deserved to be afflicted and grie-  
ved. Surely I ought to bear it: and  
I would to God I might bear it  
with patience, untill the tempest

be passed over, and it become calm. But thy omnipotent hand is able to take this temptation from me, and to assuage the violence thereof, that I utterly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, my God, my Mercie. And how much the more hard it is to me, so much the more easie is this change of thy mighty hand to thee.

## CHAP. XXX.

*Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.*

Sonne, I am thy Lord, who do use to give comfort in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which most of all hindreth heavenly consolation, that thou art slow in turning thy self unto prayer. For before thou dost earnestly commend thy self to me, thou seekest many comforts, and delightest thy self in outward things. And hence it proceedeth that all doth little profit thee, untill thou consider that I am he, that deliver those that trust in me: and that out of me there is neither powerfull help, nor profitable counsell, nor remedie that can continue. But now thou having recovered breath after the

the tempest, gather strength again in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand, saith our Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but also abundantly, and in a very plentiful measure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and constant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will be given thee in due time. Attend me, expect, I will come and cure thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee: and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What else doth the care for future incertainties bring thee, but sorrow upon sorrows? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never happen.

3. But it is incident to man, to be deluded with such imaginations: and a signe of little courage to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or false which he proposeth: whether he overthrow thee with the love of present, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither do thou fear. Believe in me and put thy trust in my

my mercie. When thou thinkest thy self furthest off from me, oftentimes I am nearest unto thee. When thou judgest that almost all is lost, then oftentimes greatest gain of merit is at hand. All is not lost when any thing falleth out contrary unto thee. Thou must not judge according to that which thou seekest for the present: nor give thy self over to any grief from whence soever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy self wholly left although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort: for this is the way to the kingdome of heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee, and the rest of my servants, that ye be exercised with many adversities, then that ye should have all things according to your desires. I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy soules health, that thou be left sometimes without taste and feeling of spirituall sweetnesse, lest perhaps thou shouldest be puffed up with good successe, and shouldest please thy self in that which thou art not. That which I have given, I can take away, and restore it again when I please

5. When

5. When I give it, it is mine: when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine: for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any Crosse whatsoever, repine not, nor be not dismayed: I can quickly lift thee up again, and turn all thy sorrow into joy. Nevertheless I am just, and greatly to be praised, when I do all this unto thee.

6. If thou be wise, and consider well thy case, thou wilt never yield so cowardly to grief, for any adversitie that befall thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks: yea, to account this thy onely joy, that afflicting thee with sorrows, I do not spare thee. As my Father hath loved me, I also love you, said I unto my beloved Disciples; whom certainly I sent not to temporall joyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours, but to contempts: not to idlenesse, but to labours: not to rest, but to bring much fruit in patience. My Sonne remember these words.

CHAP. XXXI.

*Of the contempt of all creatures, to find our Creator.*

**L**ord, I stand yet in need of great grace, if I must go so farre  
as

as that no man or creature can hinder me. For as long as any thing holdeth me, I cannot flie freely unto thee. He desired to flie with great libertie that said, Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will flie and rest. What thing more quiet then a single eye? And what more free, then he that desireth nothing upon earth? Man ought therefore to ascend above all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excesse of mind, and consider that thou, who art the Maker of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unlesse a man be free from the affection of all creatures, he cannot with freedome of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative men to be found, for that few can wholly sequester themselves from fading creatures.

2. Much grace is necessarie to lift up a soul, and to carry it above it self. And unlesse a man be lifted up in spirit, and delivered from all creatures, and wholly united unto God, whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. Long shall he be little, and lie in earthly baseness, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one onely unmeasurable and eternall

eternall Good. For whatsoever is not God is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdom of a spirituall and devout person, and the knowledge of a learned and studious Clerk. Farre more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavour not to exercise those things that are required thereunto. It is a great hinderance that we rest in signes and sensible things, and have little true mortification. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called spirituall, that we take so much pains, & so great care for transitory and base things; and scarce or selome think of our own inward profit, with full recollection of our senses.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break forth, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie: nor bewail the impurity and many faults that are in all our affections. For all flesh had corrupted her way, and therefore did that generall flood ensue. Sith our inward affection then

then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thereof be corrupted, as a signe of the want of inward vigour. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done: but how virtuous his actions are, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautifull, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer: but how poore he is in spirit, how patient, and meek, how devout and spirituall, is seldome spoken of. Nature respecteth outward things, grace turneth her self to the inward virtues. That is often deceived: this hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

#### CHAP. XXXII.

*Of deniall of our selves, and forsaking  
all our affections.*

Sonne, thou canst not possesse perfect libertie, unlesse thou wholly denie thy self. All such as be lovers of themselves are bound in fetters, they are covetous, curious, wanderers, seekers of ease, and not of those things that appertain to Jesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing



Ch. 32. Or, *The following of Christ.* 175

fraining that which will not continue. For all shall perish that proceedeth not from God. Keep this short and complete word: Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest. Consider this well; and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. Lord, this is not one dayes work, nor childrens sport: yea, in this short sentence all the perfection of religious persons is included. Sonne, thou must not go back, nor straitwayes be dejected, when thou hearest the way of the perfect; but rather be stirred up to more worthy and noble attempts, or at least to conceive an earnest desire thereof. I would it were so well with thee, & thou wert come so farre, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy self, but didst stand merely at my beck, and at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee: then thou shouldst exceedingly please me, and all thy life would passe away in joy and peace. Thou hast yet many things to forsake which unlesse thou wholly resigne over unto me, thou shalt not attain to that which thou desirest. I counsel thee to buy of me purified gold, that thou mayst become rich, that is, heavenly wisdom, which treadeth under foot all base

176 *The Christians pattern*, Lib. III.  
base and earthly things. Set little by  
the wisdom of this world, and esteem  
not of the contentment of men, nor  
thine own fancies.

3. I said, that thou shouldst buy  
the mean and base things, with the  
precious, and those that were with  
men of great esteem. For true hea-  
venly wisdom seemeth very base, and  
of small account, & is scarce thought  
of by men: for that esteemeth not  
highly of it self, nor seeketh to be  
magnified upon earth: which many  
praise from the teeth outward, but in  
their life they are farre from it: yet is  
it the precious pearl which is hidden  
from many.

#### CHAP. XXXII.

*Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing  
our small intentions unto God.*

Sonne, trust not to thy affections:  
that which now is, will quickly  
change into another. As long as thou  
livest thou art subject to mutability,  
even against thy will: so that now  
thou art merry, now sad; now quiet,  
now troubled; now devout, now di-  
stracted; now diligent, now idle; now  
heavy, now light. But he that is wise  
and well instructed in spirit, remain-  
eth alwayes one in the midst of these  
changes,

changes, not heeding what he seeketh in himself, or which way the wind of mutability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend, as it ought, to the most perfect and best end. For so he may continue one, and the self same, without any change in the midst of so many sundry chances, directing alwayes the sincere eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, so much the more constantly doth he passe through the variety of many contrary waves. But in many things the eye of a sincere intention waxeth blind, for it quickly looketh upon some delightful object that it meeteth withall. And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of seeking himself. So the Jews in times past came into Bethania to Martha and Mary, not for Jesus alone, but to see Lazarus also. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged, that it may be sincere and pure, and to be directed unto me, neglecting the multitude and variety of earthly objects.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

*That God is sweet above all things, and  
in all things, to him that loveth.*

**B**Ehold my God, and behold all things! What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and comfortable word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world, nor those things that are in the world. My God, & all things! Enough is said to him that understandeth: and it is pleasant to him that loveth to repeat it often. For when thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, all become irksome. Thou givest quiet of heart and much peace, and pleasant joy. Thou makest men think well of all, and praise thee in all things: neither can any thing please us long without thee: but if it be pleasant and delightful, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the sweetness of thy wisdom.

2. What can be distastfull unto him to whom thou art pleasing? And whom thou delightest not what can be pleasant to him? But the wise of this world, and they that have their contentment in sensuall things, cannot attain to thy wisdom: for in the world

world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proved to be truly wise: for they are changed from vanity to truth, from flesh to spirit. To these God is sweet, and what good soever is found in creatures, they wholly referre unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great, yea very great, is the difference between the sweetnesse of the Creatour, and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of uncreated and created light.

3. O everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, cast forth the beams of thy brightnesse from above, and pierce the most inward corners of my heart: purifie, rejoyce, clarifie, and quicken my spirit with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with excessse of unspeakable joy. O when will that blessed and desired houre come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou maist be unto me all in all. As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full nor perfect joy. Alas! my old man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth yet covet strongly against the spirit, and moveth evil warres, and suffereth not

80 *The Christians pattern, Lib.III.*  
the Kingdome of my soul to be in  
peace.

4. But thou that rulest the powers of the sea, and asswagest the motion of the waves, rise and help me: dissipate the people that desire warre, and destroy them in thy might, & let thy hand be glorified: for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

#### CHAP. XXXV.

*That there is no security from temptation  
in this life.*

Sonne, there is no security in this life: as long as thou livest thou shalt alwayes have need of spirituall armour. Thou livest among enemies, and art assaulted on all sides. If therefore thou defendest not thy self on every side with the shield of patience, thou canst not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not the heart on me with a sincere will to suffer all things for me, thou canst not sustain the heat of this battel, nor get that victorious crown which they have that are in glory. Thou oughtest therefore manfully to go through all, and to use a strong hand against whatsoever withstandeth thee. For to him that overcometh is given Man-

Ch. 35. or, *The following of Christ.* 18,  
na; and to the negligent is left much  
wo.

2. If thou seekest rest in this world,  
how wilt thou attain to everlasting  
rest? Give not thy self to much ease,  
but to much patience. Seek true  
peace, not in earth, but in heaven;  
not in men, nor in any creature, but in  
God alone. Thou oughtest for the  
love of God willingly to undergo  
whatsoever labours, to endure what-  
soever griefs, temptations, anxieties,  
necessities, infirmities, injuries, de-  
tractions, reprehensions, humiliations,  
confusions, corrections, & contempts:  
these help to the attaining of virtue:  
these try a Novice of Christ: these  
make up an heavenly crown. I will  
give an everlasting reward for a short  
labour, and infinite glory for transito-  
ry confusion.

3. Thinkest thou that thou shalt  
alwayes have spirituall consolations  
at will? My Saints had not so; but ma-  
ny afflictions, and sundry temptations,  
and many discomforts: all which  
they endured patiently, and trusted  
rather in God then in themselves,  
knowing that the sufferings of this  
time are not worthy to obtain future  
glory. Wilt thou have that straight-  
wayes, which many after tears and  
great labours have hardly obtained?

Expect the coming of thy Lord, do manfully, be of good courage : fear not, do not fly, but offer both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

## CHAP. XXXVI.

*Against the vain judgements  
of men.*

Sonne, fix thy heart stedfastly on God, and fear not the judgements of men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy justice and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to suffer in that sort : neither will it be burdensome to an humble mind, nor to him that trusteth rather in God, then in himself. The most part of men are given to talk much, and therefore little care is to be had of their words: neither is it possible to satisfie all. Though the Apostle endeavoured to please all in our Lord, and made himself all unto all, yet he little regarded that he was judged by humane judgement.

2. He did for the edification and health of others as much as he could, and lay in him; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged  
and



and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues, and such as thought vanities and lies, and spake what they listed: Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered, lest the weak might have received scandal by his silence.

3. Who art thou that fearest a mortal man? To day he is, and to morrow he is not seen. Fear God and the terror of men shall not trouble thee. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurteth himself then thee: neither can he avoid the judgements of God, be he what he will. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the present thou seemest to be troden down, and to suffer shame and confusion without desert, do not repine, neither do thou lessen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in heaven. I am able to deliver thee from all shame and wrong, and to repay every one according to their works.

## CHAP. XXXVII.

*Of a full and pure resignation of our  
selves, for the obtaining free-  
dome of heart.*

Sonne, leave thy self, and thou shalt find me. Make choice of nothing, appropriate nothing to thy self and thou shalt ever gain. For greater grace shall alwayes be given thee, when thou dost perfectly resigne thy self, and not turn back to take thy self again. Lord, how often shall I resigne my self; and wherein shall I forsake my self? Alwayes, and in every thing, as well in little as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be as it were naked and void of all things. Otherwise how canst thou be perfectly mine, and I thine, unlesse both within and without thou be free from all self-will? And how much the sooner thou dost this, so much the better able shalt thou find thy self, and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doest it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resigne themselves, but with some exception, For they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore do labour to provide

vide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of a pure heart, nor to the grace of my Divine familiarity, unless they first make an entire resignation, and offer themselves a daily sacrifice unto me. For without this the union with me, wherewith my Saints enjoy me, can never be obtained.

3. I have often said unto thee, and now again I say the same, Forsake thy self, resigne thy self, and thou shalt enjoy great internall peace. Give all for all; seek nothing, require nothing, repose thy self purely and with a full confidence in me, and I will give my self unto thee, and darknesse shall not cover thee. Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy desire, that casting off all propriety, thou mayest onely follow thy naked Saviour Jesus; and dying to thy self, mayst live eternally to me. Then shall vain fantasies, evil perturbations, and all superfluous cares fly away: then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

*Of good government in outward things,  
and of recourse to God in dangers.*

Sonne, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or externall busines, thou be inwardly free and master of thy self, and that all things be under thy disposition, and thou not subject to them; that thou mayst be lord and master of thy actions, not a servant or a hireling, but rather a free-man and a true Hebrew, belonging to the lot and freedome of the sonnes of God, who put the things that are present under their feet, and place their thoughts on that which is eternall: who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of heaven: who suffer not themselves to be drawn to cleave unto them, but rather dispose and use them, as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creatour of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain firm and steadfast in all events, and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnall eye the things which thou seest and hearest; but presently in every occasion dost enter with Moses  
into

into the Tabernacle to ask counsel of our Lord, thou shalt sometimes heare the divine and celestiall Oracle, and shalt return instructed of many things both present and to come. Moses had alwayes recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of all doubts and obscure questions, and fled to the help of prayer, for the remedie of the iniquity and dangers of men. So oughtest thou in like manner to fly to the closet of thy heart, earnestly craving the Divine favour. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was Joshua and the children of Israel deceived by the Gibeonites, because they consulted not first with God, but giving too lightly credit to fair words, were deluded with counterfeite pietie.

## CHAP. XXXIX.

*That a man be not over-earnest in his affairs.*

Sonne, alwayes commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time: expect my ordination, and thou shalt find it wil be for thy good. Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can profit little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readinesse of mind to thy Divine pleasure.

2. Sonne,

2. Sonne, oftentimes a man doth earnestly labour for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind, and not to esteem so much of it as before he did: for mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do passe from one to another. It is therefore a matter not of least moment, to forsake our selves even in the least things.

3. The true spirituall profit of man consisteth in denying and forsaking of himself: and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedome and security. But the ancient enemy, who alwayes laboureth to withstand the servants of God, omitteth at no time his wonted temptations, but day and night lieth still in wait, to cast the unwary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. Watch therefore and pray, saith our Lord, that you enter not into temptation.

#### CHAP. XL.

*That man hath no good of himself,  
nor any thing wherof he  
can glory.*

**L**Ord, what is man that thou art  
mindfull of him, or the sonne of  
man, that thou vouchsafest to visit  
him?

him? What hath man deserved that thou shouldest give him thy grace? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou doest not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truly think and say, Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of my self, but in all things I do fail, and am defective, and do ever tend to nothing: and unlesse thou help me, and dost interiorly instruct me, I become cold, and am dissolved.

2. But thou, O Lord, art alwayes the same, and endurest for ever; alwayes good, just, and holy, doing all things well, justly, and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom. But I that am more inclined to fall, then to go forward, do never continue in one estate: for seaven different times are changed over me, yet doth it soon turn to the better when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou touchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the favour of man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my heart shall be converted, and rest in thee alone.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly

feately forsake ali humane comfort, either for the love of devotion, or for mine own necessitie, which inforceth me to seek after thee (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce in the gift of new consolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me: but I am mere vanitie, & nothing before thee, an unconstant and weak man. Whereof then can I glorie? Or why do I desire to be esteemed of? Is it not of nothing? And this is most vain. Truly vainglory is an evil plague and very great vanitie: because it draweth from true glorie, and robbeth the soul of heavenly grace. For whilst a man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee: whilst he gapeth after the praise of men, he is deprived of true virtue.

5. But true glorie, and holy exultation, and joy, is for a man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy name, and not in his own virtue, nor to delight in any creature but for thee. Praised be thy name, not mine: magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy name be forever blessed, but to me let no part of mens praises be given. Thou art my glory:



glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but for my self I will not joy, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the Jews seek the glory, which one man giveth to another: I will desire this, which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporall honour, all worldly highnesse, compared to thy eternall glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercie, my God, most Blessed Trinitie, to thee alone be all praise, honour, virtue, and glory for all eternitie.

## CHAP. XLI.

*Of the contempt of all temporall honours.*

Some, trouble not thy self, if thou seeke others honoured and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in heaven, and the contempt of men in earth will not grieve thee. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me:

me: for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honour, and glory. And unlesse I do prepare my self, that I be willing, and do rejoyce to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all, I cannot obtain internall strength and peace, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor wholly united unto thee.

### CHAP. XLII.

*That our peace is not to be placed  
in men.*

**S**OME, if the peace thou hast with any, be grounded on the opinion which thou hast of him, or on the contentment thou receivest in his company, thou shalt ever be unconstant and subject to disquiet: but if thou have recourse unto the everliving and eternall Truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to rest in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be, whom thou thinkest well of, and is verily dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is the love true and pure, which they have, whose hearts are not joyned together by me. Thou oughtest

Ch. 42. or, *The following of Christ.* 193 :

oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of men. Man approacheth so much the nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all earthly comfort: so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God, by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the baser he is in his own conceit.

2. But he that attributeth any good thing unto himself, hindreth the coming of Gods grace into him. For the grace of the holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble heart. If thou couldst perfectly annihilate thy self, and purge thy self of all created love, then should there flow into thee great abundance of my grace. When thou castest thy eyes on creatures, the sight of thy Creatour is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy self in all things, for the love of thy Creatour; and then shalt thou be able to attain to heavenly knowledge. How little soever it be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded, it defileth the soul, and hindreth the enjoying of the chiefest good.

## CHAP. XLIII.

*Against vain and secular knowledge.*

Sonne, let not the fair speeches, & subtile sayings of men move thee. For the Kingdome of God consisteth not in words, but in viiue. Observe well the words which I speak: for they inflame the heart, and enlighten the mind, induce compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Do thou neuer reade to shew thy self learned or wise; but labour to mortifie thy vices: for that will profit thee more, then the knowledge of many hard and difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things, thou oughtest ever to return to one beginning. I am he, that teacheth man all knowledge, and do give to little ones a more clear understanding, then can be taught by man. He therefore, to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in spirit. Woe be to them, that enquire many curious things of men, and do little desire to know the way how to serve me. The time will come, when the Master of masters shal appear, Christ the Lord of Angels to heare the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of every one: and then he will search Jerusalem with

with a candle, and the hidden things of darknesse shall be laid open, and the inventions of tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant do raise up the humble mind to understand more reasons of the everlasting truth, then can be gotten by ten years studie in schools. I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without contention of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise earthly things, to lothe things present, to seek the everlasting, to delight in the things that are eternal, to fly honours, to suffer scandals, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things fervently to love me.

4. For one by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and spake wonders: he profited more in forsaking all things, then in studying subtilties. To some I speak ordinary things, to others, things more rare; to some I appear sweetly by signes and figures, but to some I reveal mysteries with much light. The voice of books is one, but it teacheth not all men alike. For I am the internall Teacher, I am the Truth, the searcher of the heart, the understander of thoughts,

196 *The Christians pattern*, Lib. III.  
the letter forwards of good words,  
distributing to every one according to  
my will.

#### CHAP. XLIV.

*Of not drawing ourward things to  
our selves.*

Sonne, in many things thou oughtest  
to be ignorant, and esteeme thy  
self as dead upon earth, and as one  
to whom the whole world is cruci-  
fied. Thou must also passe over ma-  
ny things with a deaf care, and ra-  
ther think of that, which appertain-  
eth to thy peace. It is more profita-  
ble to turn thine eyes from the sight  
of displeasing things, and to leave un-  
to every one his own opinion, then to  
strive with contentious words. If  
thou standest well with God and  
confidest his judgements, thou shalt  
the more easily yield to the will of  
others.

2. O Lord, to what an estate are  
we come! Behold, we bewail a tem-  
porall losse, and for a little gain we  
toil and spare no labour; and the spi-  
rituall damage of our soul is forgot-  
ten, and hardly at length called to  
mind. That which little or nothing  
profiteth, is alwaies remembered, and  
that which is chiefly necessary, is  
negligently

Ch. 45. or, *The following of Christ.* 197

negligently passed over, because mans nature carrieth him to externall things; and unlesse he quickly return unto himself, he lieth drowned in them with delight.

### CHAP. XLV.

*That credit is not to be given to all men: and how prone man is to offend in words.*

**H**elp me, Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the defence of man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith, where I thought it sure? And how often have I found faith, where I least expected it? It is vain therefore to trust in men; but the safety of the just, O Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou, my God, in all things that befall us. We are weak and inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon changed,

2. Who is he, that is able so warily to keep himself, that he never fall into any deceit or doubt? But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and seeketh with a pure heart, doth not easily fall; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much inthrall'd, yet he shall quickly be delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee.

thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithfull in his friends distresse: but thou, O Lord, thou alone art faithfull at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was that ho'y soul that said, My mind is firmly settled and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware beforehand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But alas we are men, and God knoweth, weak and frail men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the truth that neither dost deceive, nor canst be deceived. And on the other side, every man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words: and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first a certain truth.



4. O with how great wisdom hast thou warned us to take heed of men ! And because the enemies of man are his familiar & domesticall acquaintance, not to trust, if one should say, Behold here, or behold there. I am taught to my cost, and I would to God I might thereby encrease my care, and not my folly. Be wary, saith one, be wary; keep to thy self what I tell thee: & whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales and such improvident people protect me, Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such errours. Give me grace, my God, to observe truth and constancy in my words, and remove farre from me a deceitfull tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good and quiet a thing it is to be silent, and not to talk of others, nor to believe all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; alwayes to seek after thee, the beholder of the heart; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both

within and without; be accomplished according to thy will and pleasure. How secure is it for the keeping of heavenly grace, to fly the sight of men; and not to seek those things that seem to cause admirati<sup>o</sup>n abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life, and encrease of zeal.

6. To how many hath virtue known and over-hastily commended, been hurtfull? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortall life, which is nothing but a perpetuall temptation, and a warfare?

#### CHAP. XLVI.

*Of putting our trust in God when  
evil words arise.*

**S**onne, be constant, and put thy trust in me. For what are words but words? They passe through the air, but hurt not. If thou be guilty, determine willingly to amend thy self: if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly, at least for God. It is a small matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure stripes. And why do small matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnall, and regardest men more then thou

thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, and thereby seekest shadows of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self, and thou shalt see that the world yet lieth in thee, & a vain desire to please men. For when thou refuseth to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is surely evident that thou art neither truly humble, nor dead to the world, nor the world perfectly crucified to thee. But give diligent eare to my words, and thou shalt little respect ten thousand words spoken by men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to passe, and madest no reckoning at all of it? could all those words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath not his heart within him, nor God before his eyes, is easily moved with every little disparage when as he that trusteth in me, & trusteth not in his own judgement, shall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the discerners of all secrets. I know how the matter passed, I know him that offereth the injury, and him that suffereth it.

From

From me hath this word proceeded: this hath happened by my permission: that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed. I shall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a secret judgement I would before hand try them both.

4. The testimony of men oftentimes deceiveth: my judgement is alwayes true; it shall stand, and not be overthrowen. It is commonly hidden and secret, and not known in every thing, but to few: notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to return to me in every judgement, & not to stand in their own opinions. For the just man will not be troubled whatsoever happeneth unto him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth the heart & reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the judgement of men is commendable.

5. O Lord my God, the just Judge, strong and patient; thou knowest the frailty

deceitful and perversity of man; be thou  
 thy strength, and all my trust, for mine  
 own conscience sufficeth me not.  
 Thou knowest that which I cannot  
 reach unto, and therefore in every re-  
 prehension I ought to have submitted  
 my self, and to have borne it patiently:  
 teachsafe mercifully to pardon me,  
 as often as I have failed herein, and  
 give me again grace of greater suffer-  
 ance. For thy bountifull mercy is  
 more available to me for the obtain-  
 ing of pardon, then my conceived ju-  
 stice for the defence of my hidden  
 conscience. Although my conscience  
 accuse me not, yet I cannot hereby  
 justify my self; for if thy mercy be  
 away, no man living shall be justified  
 in thy sight.

CHAP. XLVII.

*That all grievous things are to be en-  
 dured for life everlasting.*

Sonne, let not the pains dismay  
 thee which thou hast undertaken  
 for me, neither be thou discomfited  
 for the tribulations which do befall  
 thee; but let my promise strengthen  
 and comfort thee in all events. I am  
 able to reward thee above all mea-  
 sure. Thou shalt not long toil here,  
 nor a'wayes be oppressed with grief.

At

Attend a while, and thou shalt see a speedie end of thy evils. There will come an houre when all labour and trouble shall cease. Little and short is all that passeth away with time.

2. Do as thou doest; labour faithfully in my vineyard; I will be thy reward. Write, reade, sing, mourn, keep silence, pray, suffer crosses manfully: life everlasting is worthy of all these and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is known unto our Lord, and it shall not be day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlasting light, infinite brightnesse, stedfast peace, and secure rest. Then thou shalt not say, Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? nor crie, Wo be unto me, for that my dwelling in a strange countrey is prolonged! For death shall be thrown down, and health shall be without decay; no anxietie; blessed joy, sweet and glorious company.

3. O if thou hadst seen the everlasting crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times past were contemptible to this world, and esteemed unworthy of life it self; truly thou wouldest presently humble thy self even unto the earth, and wouldest rather seek to be under the  
feet

feet of all them to have command so much as over one: neither wouldst thou desire the pleasant dayes of this life, but rather rejoyce to be afflicted for God, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst men.

4. O if thou hadst a feeling of these things, and didst suffer them to enter into the depth of thy heart, how durst thou so much as once to complain! Are not all painfull labours to be endured for everlasting life? It is no small matter to lose or to gain the Kingdome of heaven. Lift up thine eyes therefore unto heaven: behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are secure, now do rest, and shall remain with me everlastingly in the Kingdome of my Father.

### CHAP. XLVIII.

*Of the everlasting day, and shortnesse of this life.*

O Most blessed mansion of the heavenly Citty! O most clear day of Eternitie, which night obscureth not, but the highest truth ever enlightneth; day ever pleasant, ever secure, and never changing into contrary

ry state ! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporall things were at an end ! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightnesse, but to those that are Pilgrimes upon earth, it appeareth once ly as farre off, and as it were through a glasse.

2. The inhabitants of heaven doe know how joyfull that day is : but the banished children of Eve beware the bitternesse and tediousnesse of this. The dayes of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish where man is defiled with many sinnes, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errours, worn away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakened with delights, tormented with want.

3. O when shall these evils be at an end ! When shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of sinne ! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone ! When shall I perfectly rejoyce in thee ! When shall I be free from all impediments in true libertie, without all grief of mind and body ! When shall I have firm peace, peace  
secure



secure and without trouble, peace within and without, peace every way assured! O good Jesu when shall I stand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdome! When wilt thou be unto me all in all! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdome, which thou hast prepared for thy beloved from before all worlds! I am left a poore and banished man in the land of mine enemies, where there are dayly warres, and great misfortunes.

4. Comfort my banishment, asswage my sorrow; for my whole desire sendeth up sighes unto thee. For all is burdennome to me, whatsoever this world offereth for my comfort. I desire familiarly to enjoy thee, but I cannot attain unto it. I would gladly fix my heart to the things of heaven, but temporall cares and unmortified passions weigh me down. In mind I would be above all things, but to my flesh I am inforced to be subject against my will. Thus unhappie man that I am, I fight against my self, and am become grievous to my self, whilst my spirit seeketh after the things that are above, and my flesh that which is below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when in mind I consider heavenly things,

things, and presently in my prayers multitude of fleshly fantasies present themselves before me! My God, be not farre from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them: send out thy darts, and break all the fantasies of my enemy. Gather my senses together unto thee, make me forget the things of this world: grant me grace to cast away speedily the fantasies of vices. Succour me, O everlasting truth, that no vanity may move me. Come heavenly sweetnesse and let all impuritie flie from thy face. Pardon me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer. I truly confesse, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions: for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit, but rather there, whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thought is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly offereth it self unto me, which is naturally delightfome, and by custome pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art truth it self hast plainly said, Where thy treasure is, there is also thy heart. If I love heaven, I willingly

lingly think of heavenly things. If I love the world, I rejoyce at the felicity of the world, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the flesh, I imagine oftentimes those things that are pleasing to the flesh: if I love the spirit, I delight to think of spirituall things. For whatsoever I love, thereof do I willingly speak, and heare, and carry home with me the forms and representations thereof. O blessed is that man, that for thee, O Lord, forsaketh all creatures; that violently resisteth nature, and out of the fervour of spirit crucifieth the concupiscence of the flesh, that with a clear conscience he may offer sincere prayers unto thee, and be worthy of the company of Angelicall quires, all earthly things outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

## CHAP. XLIX.

*Of the desire of everlasting life, and how  
great rewards are promised to those  
that fight valiantly.*

Sonne, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting blisse to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou maist without shadow of any interchange behold my  
O light;

light; open thy heart, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire. Give great thanks to the heavenly goodnesse, that dealeth with thee so favourably, visiteth thee mercifully, stirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, lest through thine own weight thou fall down to the vanities of the earth. Neither dost thou obtain this by thine own thought or endeavour, but by the onely favour of heavenly grace and divine bountie, that thou maist profit in virtue, & obtain greater humilitie, and prepare thy self to future battels; and endeavour to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and serve me with a fervent desire.

3. Sonne, fire often burneth, but the flame ascendeth not up without smoke: so likewise the desires of some men are earnestly carried to heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnall affection: and therefore it is not altogether pure for the honour of God that which they so earnestly request of him. Such is also oftentimes thy desire, which with such importunity thou presentest unto me. For that is not pure and perfect, which is infected and defiled with the love of thine own  
proper

proper commoditie and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightfull and profitable to thee, but that which is gratefull to me, and appertaineth to my honour: for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to preferre and follow my appointment, rather then thine own desire, or any desired thing. I know thy desire, & have heard thy often grones. Now thou wouldest be in the freedome of the glorie of the Sonnes of God: now both the everlasting habitation, and the heavenly Countrie full of joy delight thee, but this houre is not yet come: it is yet another time, to wit, of warre, a time of labour and triall. Thou desirest to be filled with the chiefest good, but thou canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith our Lord, expect untill the Kingdome of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon earth, and to be exercised in many things. Comfort shall be sometimes given thee but abundant fulnesse thereof shall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to be on a new man, and to be changed into another man. Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldest

not, and leave undone that thou wouldest do. That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forwards: that which thou wishest, shall not speed. That which others say, shall be heard: what thou saist shall be nothing regarded. Others shall ask and shall receive: Thou shalt ask & not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praise of men, but of thee there shall be no speech; to others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes repine, and it is much if thou endurest it with silence. In these and such like, a faithful servant of our Lord is wont to be tried, how he can denie and overcome himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast such need to mortifie thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy will, especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or of little purpose. And for that thou being placed under authoritie darest not resist higher power, therefore seemeth hard unto thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave wholly thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Sonne, the fruit of these labours, the end near at hand.

and the reward above all measure, & thou shalt receive no grief thereby, but great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy will, which now thou willingly forsakest, thou shalt alwayes have thy will in heaven. There thou shalt have all that thou wilt or canst desire; there thou shalt enjoy all good without fear of losing it; there shall thy will be ever one with me; it shall desire nothing, strange or private; there no man shall withstand thee, no man complain of thee, no man hinder thee, nothing come against thee: but all things desired shall be there together present, and refresh thy who's affection, and fulfill it to the highest degree: there I will give thee glory for the reproch which here thou sufferedst; a garment of praise for former grief; for the lowest place, a seat of an everlasting Kingdome; there shall the fruit of obedience appear, the labour of repentance rejoyce, and humble subjection shall be gloriously crowned.

7. Now therefore bow thy self with great humilitie under the hands of all, and regard not who said or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superiour, or thy inferiour, or thine equall require

any thing of thee, or do insinuate their desire, thou take it all in good part, and endeavour to fulfill it with a sincere intention. Let one seek this, another that; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praised a thousand thousand times; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and onely in my good pleasure and honour. This art thou to wish, that whether it be by life or death, God may be alwayes glorified in thee.

## CHAP. I.

*How a desolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.*

**L**ord God, Holy Father, thy holy name be now and for ever blessed; because as thou wilt, so is it done, and what thou doest, is good. Let thy servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself, nor in any thing else, for thou alone art the true gladnesse, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honour, O Lord. What hath thy servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any desert of his? Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poore, and in labours from my youth: & sometimes my soul is heavy even unto tears, sometimes  
also



also it is troubled in it self, by reason of passions which rise against her.

2. I desire the joy of peace, I have the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of comfort. If thou give peace, if thou infuse holy joy, the soul of thy servant shall be full of heavenly sweetnesse, & shall become devout in thy praise: but if thou withdraw thy self, as very often thou art wont, he will not be able to runne the wayes of thy commandments, but rather he boweth his knees, and knocketh his breast, for it is not with him, as it was yesterday, and the day before, when thy light shined upon his head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the houre is come, that thy servant is to be proved! Behold Father, it is fit that in this houre thy servant suffer something for thee. O Father worthy of eternall honour, the houre is come, which from all eternitie thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time thy servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee: he should be a little despised, and humbled, and made as an abject

in the sight of men, and much afflicted with passions and infirmities, that he may rise again with thee, in the rising of new light, and be clarified in heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it, and wilt have it so: and this is fulfilled which thyself hast commanded.

4. It is a grace and a favour to thy friend to suffer, and to be afflicted in the world for love of thee, how often soever, and by whomsoever thou permittest it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to passe, either without thy counsell, without thy providence, or without a cause why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast humbled me, that I may learn thy righteous judgements, and cast away all haughtinesse of heart and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath covered my face, that I may rather seek to thee for comfort then to men. I have learned also hereby to dread thy inscrutable judgement, that afflicteth the just with the wicked, but not without equitie and justice.

5. I give thee thanks, that thou hast not spared my sinnes, but hast worn me away with bitter stripes, inflicting sorrows, and sending grief within and without. There is none  
under

under heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heavenly Physician of souls, that strikest and healest, bringest down to hell and raisest up again: let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod instruct me.

6. Behold, beloved Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my self under the rod of thy correction: let my neck and shoulders feel the stripes of thy chastisement, that my crookednesse may be conformed to thy will. Make me a devout and humble disciple of thine, as thou art wont well to do, that I may be readie at every beck of thy divine pleasure. I commend my self and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, then hereafter. Thou knowest all and every thing, and there is nothing hidden in the conscience of man, which can be hidden from thee. Before things are done, thou knowest that they will happen, & hast no need that any should teach thee, or admonish thee of those things which are done on earth. Thou knowest what is expedient for my good, and how much tribulation is fit for purging the rust of my sinnes. Do with me according to thy desired pleasure, and despise not my sinfull life, better  
and

218 *The Christians pattern,* Lib. III.  
and more clearly known to none then  
to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know  
that which is to be known, to love  
that which is to be loved, to praise  
that which pleaseth thee most, to  
esteem that which is precious unto  
thee, to despise that which is con-  
temptible in thy sight: suffer me not  
to judge according to the sight of  
the exteriour eyes, nor to give sen-  
tence according to the hearing of the  
eares of ignorant men; but to di-  
scern of visible and spirituall things  
with a true judgement, and above all  
things ever to search after thy good  
will and pleasure.

8. The senses of men are often de-  
ceived in their judgements; the lo-  
vers of the world are also deceived in  
loving onely visible things. What is  
a man the better, for that he is  
esteemed great by man? The deceit-  
full in exalting the deceitfull, the vain  
man in extolling the vain, the blind in  
commending the blind, the weak in  
magnifying the weak, deceiveth him,  
and doth verily more shame him,  
while he doth vainly praise him. For  
how much every one is in thy sight,  
so much he is, and no more.

CHAP.

## CHAP. LI.

*That a man ought to imploy himself in  
works of Humilitie, when strength  
is wanting for higher im-  
ployments.*

Sonne, thou art not able alwayes to continue in the fervent desire of virtue, nor to persist in the high pitch of divine contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessitie by reason of original corruption descend to inferiour things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will. As long as thou carriest a mortall bodie, thou shalt feel trouble and heavinesse of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh: for that thou canst not alwayes persevere in spirituall exercises, and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie to humble and exteriour works, and to refresh thy self with good virtuous actions, to expectt with a firm confidence my coming, and heavenly visitation, to bear patientlv thy banishment, and the drynesse of thy mind, till I visit thee again, and deliver thee from all trouble. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietnesse.

I

I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou maist begin to runne the way of my commandments. And thou shalt say, that the sufferings of this time are not worthy of the glorie to come, that shall be revealed in us.

## CHAP. LII.

*That a man ought to esteem himself unworthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.*

**L**Ord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spirituall visitation, and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest me poore and desolate. For though I could shed a sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and sinned in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou mild and mercifull God, who wilt not that thy works do perish, to shew the riches of thy goodnesse upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy servant above humane measure.

sure. For thy comforts are not like to the vain words of men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldst bestow any heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have ever done any good, but have been alwayes prone to sinne, and slothfull in my amendment. It is true, and I cannot denie it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldst stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my sinnes, but hell and everlasting fire? I confesse in the truth of my heart, that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is unfit that I should be remembred amongst thy devout servants. And although I be unwilling to heare this, yet notwithstanding for the love of truth I will lay open my sinnes against my self, that I may the better obtain mercie of thee.

3. What shall I say being guiltie and full of confusion? I can utter no other word, but this, I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned: have mercy on me, pardon me, suffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darknesse, and be covered with the shadow of death. What dost thou require of a guiltie and miserable sinner, but that he be  
contrite

contrite and sorrowfull, and humble himself for his offences? In true contrition and humbleness of heart, is bred a hope of forgiveness; a troubled conscience is reconciled again, grace lost is restored, man is defended from future wrath, and God and the penitent soul meet together in an holy kisse of peace.

4. Humble contrition for sinnes is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, savouring much sweeter in thy presence then the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldst have poured upon thy sacred feet: for thou never despisest a contrite & humble heart. There is a place of refuge, from the angry face of the enemy; there is amended, and washed away whatsover elsewhere was polluted and defiled.

### CHAP. LIII.

*That the grace of God is not given to those that favour of earthly things.*

Sonne, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with externall things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hinderances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof.



thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none; but rather poure out devout prayers unto God, that thou maist keep thy mind compunct, and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing; preferre my service before all outward things: for thou canst not attend unto me, and be delighted also in transitorie vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends, and to keep thy mind deprived of all temporall comfort. So the blessed Apostle Peter required, that the faithful of Christ should keep themselves as strangers and pilgrimes in this world.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the houre of death, whom no affection to any earthly thing detaineth in the world. But the weak mind is not yet capable of so retired a heart; neither doth the fleshly person understand the freedome of a recollected mind. Notwithstanding, if he will be truly spirituall, he ought to renounce as well those which are farre off, as those which are near unto him, & to beware of no man more then of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with  
more

more ease subdue the rest. It is a glorious victorie to triumph over ourselves. For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort, that his sensualitie be subdued to reason, and reason in all things be obedient to me, he is truly a conquerour of himself, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height of perfection, thou must begin manfully, and set the ax to the root, that thou maist pluck up and destroy thy hidden and inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and earthly good. Of this vice (that man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is wholly to be overcome: which being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillitie. But for that few endeavour perfectly to die unto themselves, and to forsake themselves wholly, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves; but he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessarie that he mortifie all his inordinate affections, and not adhere unto any creature by private love.

## CHAP. LIV.

*Of the different motions of Nature,  
and Grace.*

Sonne, mark diligently the motions of thine own nature, and my grace; for in very contrary and secret manner these are moved, and can hardly be discerned but by him that is spirituall and inwardly enlightened. All men desire that which is good, and pretend some good in all their words and deeds; and therefore under pretence of good, many are deceived. Nature is deceitfull, and seduceth, intangleth, and deceiveth many, and alwayes proposeth her self for her end; but grace walketh with great sinceritie, and avoideth all shew of evil, pretendeth not deceits, and doth all things purely for Gods sake, in whom also she finally resteth.

2. Nature will not willingly die, nor be kept in, nor overcome, nor be subject to any, nor be subdued: but Grace laboureth to mortifie her self, resisteth sensualiitie, seeketh to be subject, is willing to be overcome, and will not use her own libertie: she loveth to be kept under discipline, and desireth not to rule any, but alwayes to live and remain wholly subject unto God, and for God is readie

humbly to bow unto all men. Nature striveth for her own commoditie, and considereth what profit she may receive by another: but Grace considereth not what is profitable and commodious unto herself, but rather what is profitable to many. Nature willingly receiveth honour and reverence: but Grace faithfully attributeth all honour and glorie unto God.

3. Nature feareth shame and contempt, but grace rejoyceth to suffer reproch for the name of Jesus. Nature loveth idlenesse, and bodily rest, but Grace cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labour. Nature seeketh to have those things that be curious and precious, abhorreth that which is mean and base; but Grace delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not course and mean, nor refuseth to wear that which is old and torn. Nature respecteth the things of this world, rejoyceth at earthly gain, sorroweth for losse, is moved with every little injurious word; but Grace thinketh on that which is everlasting, and cleaveth not to that which fadeth with time; she is not troubled with losse, nor exasperated with injuries, for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in heaven, where nothing perissheth.

4. Nature

4. Nature is covetous, and doth more willingly receive then give, she loveth proper and private things; but Grace is pittifull and liberall to all; avoideth singularitie, is content with a little, thinketh it happier to give then to receive. Nature inclineth to creatures, yieldeth to her own flesh, followeth vanities, and listeneth to discourses: but Grace draweth unto God, and seeketh after virtues, renounceth creatures, flieth the world, hateth desires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick. Nature is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may delight her senses: but Grace seeketh comfort in God alone, & delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. Nature worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits: she hopeth to obtain either that which is equall, or better, either praise or favour, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much esteemed: but Grace seeketh no temporall thing, nor asketh any other reward for her deserts then God alone, nor desireth more of temporall necessities, then what may serve her for the obtaining of everlasting glorie.

6. Nature rejoyceth to have many friends, and kinsfolks, she glorieth of noble birth and descent, pleaseth the powerfull, fawneth upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like herself; but Grace loveth her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends, nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; she rather favoureth the poore, then the rich, hath more compassion of the innocent, then the powerfull, rejoyceth in the simple, and respecteth not the deceitfull, exhorteth ever the good to labour for the better gifts, and by virtue to resemble the Sonne of God. Nature quickly complaineth of any want and trouble: Grace constantly suffereth all kind of need.

7. Nature turneth all things to her self, striveth and contendeth for her self: but Grace reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed: she ascribeth no good to her self, neither doth she arrogantly presume of her self: she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others, but in every sense and understanding submitteth her self unto the eternal wisdome, and to the divine judgement. Nature coveteth to know secrets, and to heare news: she will appear

appear abroad, and make proof of many things by the experience of her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be praised and admired: but Grace careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters, for that all this springeth from the ancient disorder of our corrupt nature; seeing nothing that is new, is durable upon earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration, and of every thing and every knowledge to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honour of God: she will not have her self nor hers publicly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere charitie bestoweth all things.

8. This grace is a supernaturall light, and a certain speciall gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledge of everlasting salvation, which lifteth up a man from earthly basenesse to love the things of heaven, and of a carnall maketh him a spirituall person. How much the more therefore nature is depressed and subdued, so much the greater grace is infused, and the inward man

daily by new visitations more reformed, according to the Image of God.

# CHAP. LV.

*Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.*

**M**Y God, who of thy mere goodness hast created me to thy Image and likeness, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great, and so necessarie to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sinne, and to the losse of my soul. For I feel in my flesh the law of sinne, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive, to obey sensuality in many things: neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needfull, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the first man, being fallen & corrupted by sinne, the penaltie of this stain hath descended upon all mankind, in such sort, that nature it self which by thee was created good, and without defect, is now accounted for vice, and  
for



for the infirmitie of a corrupted nature, for that the motion thereof left unto it self draweth to evil and abject things. For the little force which remaineth, is like a certain spark, lying hidden in ashes. This is naturall reason it self, compassed about with great darknesse, still retaining power to discern good and evil, and the distance between true and false, although it be unable to fulfill all that it approveth, and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the former integritie of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that according to my inward man I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandments to be good, just, and holy, reproving also all evil and sinne, and do know that it is to be fled. But in my flesh I serve the law of sinne, whilest I rather obey sensualitie, then reason. Hence it is, that I have a will to do good, but know not how to perform it. For this cause I often purpose many good things, but for that I want grace to help my infirmitie, for a light resistance I go back and faint. I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to do, but pressed with the weight of mine own corruption, I rise not unto it.

4. O Lord, how needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it. For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth comfort me. O heavenly grace, without which our own merits are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed. Arts, riches, beautie and strength, wit, or eloquence are of no worth with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and evil, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love, wherewith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This grace so much excelleth, that neither the gift of prophesie, nor the working of miracles, nor any speculation, how high soever, is of any esteem without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without charity and grace.

5. O most blessed grace, that makest the poore in spirit rich in virtues, and the rich in many blessings, humble in heart, come down unto me, replenish me in the morning with thy comfort, lest my soul should faint with wearinesse, and wither away with drinesse of mind. I beseech thee. Lord, that I may find grace in  
thy

thy sight, for thy grace sufficeth, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear evils whilest thy grace is with me: she is my strength, she giveth advise and help, she is stronger then all enemies, and wiser then all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistresse of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction: she driveth away sorrow, she expelleth fear, she is the nurse of devotion, the fountain of tears. What am I without it, but a rotten piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk onely meet for the fire? Let thy grace therefore, Lord, alwayes prevent me, and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Sonne. Amen.

# CHAP. LVI.

*That we ought to denie our selves, and imitate Christ by the Crosse.*

Sonne, look how much thou canst go out of thy self, so much maist thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of externall things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves joyneth us internally to God.

I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self unto my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow, the truth which oughtest to trust, the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way which cannot lead amisse, the truth which cannot erre, the life which cannot end. I am a most strait way, a supreme truth, a true life, yea a blessed life, an uncreated life. If thou remain in me, thou shalt know the truth, and the truth shall deliver thee, and thou shalt lay hold on everlasting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: if thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all and follow me. If thou wilt be my Disciple, denie thy self. If thou wilt possesse a blessed life, despise this present life. If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy self upon earth. If thou wilt reigne with me, bear the crosse with me. For onely the servants of the crosse find the way of blisse and true light,

3. Lord

3. Lord Jesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow, strait and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in suffering willingly all worldly contempt. For the servant is not greater then his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy servant be exercised in thy holy life, for there is the health and the true sanctitie of my soul: whatsoever I reade or heare besides, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. Sonne, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou fulfill them. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdome of my Father. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and promised, so give me grace to obtain the favour, that it be fulfilled. I have received the crosse, I have received it from thy hand, and I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good religious person is the crosse; and it is a sure guide to heaven. It is now begun, it is not lawfull to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together: Jesus will be with us. For Jesus sake we have undertaken this crosse; for the love of Jesus let us persevere in the crosse. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us: let us follow him cheerfully, let us not be dismayed, but be readie to die with courage in the battel, and let us not blemish our glorie by flying from the Crosse.

## CHAP. LVII.

*That a man be not too much dejected,  
when he falleth into some  
defects.*

Sonne, patience and humilitie in time of aduersitie are more pleasing to me, then much comfort and devotion in prosperitie. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more, thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it passe, it is not the first that hath happened, nor any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art cheerfull enough, as long  
as

Ch. 57. or, *The following of Christ.* 237

as no adversitie happeneth. Thou canst give good counsel also, and canst strengthen others with thy words, but when any tribulation suddenly knocketh at thy doore, thou art destitute of counsel, and void of strength. See therefore thy great frailtie, which thou often provest in every small occasion. It is notwithstanding permitted for thy good, when these and such like occasions befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the best thou canst, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deject thee, nor trouble thee long: bear it at least patiently, if thou canst not joyfully. Although thou be unwilling to heare it and seekest in thy heart some motion of disdain, yet pacifie thy self, and suffer no inordinate word to passe out of thy mouth, which may be a scandall to the weak. The storm which now is raised shall quickly be appeased, and inward grief shall be asswaged by the return of grace. I do yet live, saith our Lord, and am ready to help thee, and to give thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy trust in me, and callest devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy self to greater suffering. All is not lost,

lost, if thou feel thy self often afflicted, or grievously tempted. Thou art a man, and not God: thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canst thou look to continue ever in the same state of virtue, when an Angel in heaven hath fallen, and the first man in Paradise lost his standing? I am he that do give healthfull comfort to them that mourn, and do raise up unto me those that know their own infirmities.

4. Lord, blessed be thy sacred word, more sweet unto my mouth then the hony, and the hony-combe. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and anguish, unless thou didst comfort me with thy holy, sweet, and heavenly speeches? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the haven of happinesse? Grant me a good end, grant me a happie passage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, my God, and direct me the straight and ready way to thy everlasting Kingdome, Amen.



CHAP. LVIII.

*Of not searching into high matters,  
and into the secret judgements  
of God.*

**S**onne, beware thou dispute not of high matters, nor of the secret judgements of God, why this man is forsaken, and he assumed to so great grace: why also this man is so much afflicted and he so greatly advanced. These things exceed all humane power, neither can any reason or discourse of any man search out the judgement of God. When the enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee, or some envious people demand them of thee, answer that of the Prophet, Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgement is right. And again, The judgements of our Lord are true and justified in themselves. My judgements are to be feared, not to be discussed, for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of man.

2. In like manner I advise thee not to inquire, nor dispute of the rewards of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, and which is greater in the Kingdome of heaven. These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions: they  
nourish

nourish also pride and vain glory, from whence do usually spring envie and dissensions, whilst one will needs foolishly have this preferred, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose; for I am not the God of dissension but of peace, which peace consisteth rather in true humilitie, then in exalting our selves.

3. Some are carried with zeal or affection, to love these, or those most: but this love is rather humane then divine. I have made all the Saints, and have given them grace: I have made them partakers of my glory. I know how to reward every one, I have prevented them in the benedictions of my sweetnesse. I foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundrie temptations. I have sent them great inward comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know the first and last: I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints: I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honoured in every one, whom I have

Ch. 59. or, *The following of Christ.* 241

have thus gloriously exalted, and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoureth not the greatest; for that I made both the lesse and the greater: And he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me and all the rest. In the Kingdome of heaven, all are one by the band of Charitie; they think the same, they will the same, and are all knit together in one perfect band of love.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more then themselves. For being ravished above themselves, and drawn out of the affection of themselves, they tend wholly unto the love of me, in whom also they rest, enjoying me with unspeakable glory. Nothing can put them back, nothing presse them down; for being full of everlasting truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable charitie. Let therefore carnall and earthly men, that can affect no other but private joyes, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They adde and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the everlasting Truth.

6. There is in many great ignorance,

Q

rance, specially in those that be slenderly enlightned, and these can seldom love any with perfect spirituall love. They are alwayes much drawn by a naturall affection, and humane friendship to this man or to that, and according to the experience they have of themselves in their earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things, which the imperfect imagine in their conceits, & those which are illuminated do see by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Sonne, that thou treat not curiously of these things, which exceed thy knowledge, but rather so apply thy endeavours, that thou maist at least have the meanest place in the Kingdome of heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceeded others in sanctitie, or is esteemed great in the Kingdome of heaven, what would this knowledge avail him, unlesse he should thereby humble himself the more in my sight, and stirre up his mind to praise my name with greater zeal. His labour is much more acceptable unto God, that thinketh of the greatnesse of his finnes, and his want of virtues, and how farre off he

he is from the perfection of the Saints, then he that disputeth of their greatnesse. It is better to imitate the holy examples of the Saints, then to search their secrets with vain curiositie.

8. They are well, and right well contented, if men could content themselves and refrain from these vain discourses. They glory not of their own merits, for they ascribe no good unto themselves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite charitie have bestowed my blessings upon them. They are replenished with so great love of my God-head, and so superabundant joy, that there is no glory nor happinesse, that is or can be, wanting unto them. All the Saints how much the higher they be in glory, so much the more humble they are in themselves, and nearer and dearer unto me. And therefore it is written, That they did cast their Crowns before God and fell down upon their face before the Lambe, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greatest in the Kingdome of God, that know not whether they shall ever be numbered there amongst the least. It is no small matter to be even the least

in heaven, where all are great: for that all there shall be called, and shall be indeed the Sonnes of God. The least there shall be great among thousands; and the sinner of a hundred years shall die. For when the Disciples asked who was the greater in the Kingdome of heaven, they received this answer, Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdome of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is greater in the Kingdome of heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that disdain to humble themselves willingly with little children. For the low gate of the Kingdome of heaven, will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here, for whilst the poore enter into the Kingdome of God, they shall stand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble: and you that be poore be you glad, for yours is the Kingdome of God, if you walk according unto truth.

CHAP. LIX.

*That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.*

**L**ord, what trust have I in this world? Or what is the greatest comfort, that all things under heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert present? I had rather be poore for thee, then rich without thee. I rather choose to be a pilgrime on earth with thee, then to possesse heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is heaven: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my desire, and therefore it becometh me to send forth deep sighes from my heart, and crie and pray unto thee. For I have none to trust unto, none that can help me in time of necessitie, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, and my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithfull unto me in all my distresses.

2. All men seek their own gain, thou onely seekest my salvation and my profit, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou permittest many temptations to assault me, and

many adversities to befall me, yet thou ordainest all this to my good and profit, who art wont to prove thy beloved servants a thousand waies. In which proof thou oughtest no lesse to be loved and praised, then if thou didst replenish me with heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, my Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: in thee I place my tribulation and anguish, for I find all to be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many friends avail, nor forcible helpers aid, nor wise counsellours give profitable answer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any secrets, or pleasant place defend, if thou thy self dost not assist, help, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to be ordained for the rest and solace of man, when thou art absent, are nothing, and do bring indeed no joy, nor comfort at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the light of life, the depth of wisdom: and the most forcible comfort of thy servants, is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes: In thee my God, the Father of mercies, I put my whole trust.



II. Ch. 59. or, *The following of Christ.* 247  
yet trust. Blesse and sanctifie my soul  
with thy heauenly blessings, that it  
may be made thy holy habitation,  
and the seat of thy eternall glory:  
and that nothing may be found in  
the Temple of thy greatnesse, that  
may offend the eyes of thy Majestie.  
According to the greatnesse of thy  
goodnesse, and multitude of thy mer-  
cies, take pitie upon me, and heare  
the prayer of thy poore servant,  
who is farre exiled from thee in the  
land of the shadow of death. Pro-  
tect and keep the soul of thy servant,  
amidst so many dangers of this cor-  
ruptible life, and by the assistance of  
thy grace direct it in the way of peace,  
to the countrey of everlasting light.  
Amen.



## THE FOURTH BOOK.

*A devout Exhortation unto the blessed  
Sacrament.*

The voice of Christ.

**C**OME unto me, all ye that labour  
and are burdened, and I will re-  
fresh you, saith our Lord. The bread  
which I will give, is my flesh, for the  
life of the world. Take ye and eat,  
this is my body that shall be deliver-  
ed for you. Do this in remembrance  
of me. He that eateth my flesh, and  
drinketh my bloud, dwelleth in me,  
and I in him. The words which I  
have spoken unto you, are spirit and  
life.

## CHAP. I.

*With how great reverence Christ ought  
to be received.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**T**Hese are thy words, O Christ,  
everlasting Truth, though not  
spoken all at one time, nor written in  
one and the self-same place. Because  
therefore they are thine and true, they  
are all thankfully and faithfully to  
be received by me. They are thine  
and

and thou hast spoken them, and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These devout words, so full of sweetnesse and love, do stirre me up, but mine own offences do amaze me, and my impure conscience driveth me back from the receiving of so great mysteries. The sweetnesse of thy words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my sinnes doth oppresse me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee: and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you. O sweet and lovely word in the care of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldst invite the poore and needie to receive thy most blessed bodie. But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approach unto thee? behold the heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this most pious benignity, and so loving invitations? How shall I dare to come, that know  
not

not any good in me, whereupon I dare  
 may presume? How shall I bring thee into  
 into my house, that have so often  
 ten offended thy most gracious counte-  
 renance? The Angels and the Arch-  
 angels honour thee, the Saints and  
 just men do fear thee; and thou saist,  
 Come ye all unto me. Unless thou,  
 O Lord, didst say it, who would be-  
 lieve it to be true? And unless thou  
 didst command it, who would dare  
 to come unto thee? Behold Noah a  
 just man laboured a hundred years  
 in the building of the Ark, that he  
 might be saved with a few: and how  
 can I in one houres space prepare  
 my self to receive with reverence the  
 Maker of the world?

4. Moses thy great servant, & espe-  
 ciall friend, made an Ark of incor-  
 ruptible wood, which also he covered  
 with most pure gold, to put the Ta-  
 bles of the Law therein: and I a  
 rotten creature, how shall I so light-  
 ly dare to receive the Maker of the  
 Law, and the giver of life? Salomon  
 the wisest of the Kings of Israel be-  
 stowed seaven years in building a  
 magnificent Temple, in praise of thy  
 name, and celebrated the feast of the  
 Dedication thereof eight dayes toge-  
 ther: he offered a thousand peacea-  
 ble sacrifices, and set the Ark in the  
 place

Place prepared for it, with the sound of trumpets, and joy; and I the most unhappie and poorest of men, how shall I bring thee into my house, that can scarce spend one half houre devoutly? and I would to God it were once almost one half houre in worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeavour to please thee, and alas how little is that which I do? How short time do I spend, when I prepare my self to receive: I am seldom wholly recolected, very seldom altogether free from distraction; & yet surely no undecent thought ought to appear in the presence of thy Deitie, nor any creature draw me unto it: for I am not to harbour an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark and the Reliques thereof, and thy most pure body with his unspeakable virtues: between those legall sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all ancient Sacrifices. Why therefore do I not become more zealous in thy venerable presence? Wherefore do I not prepare my self with greater care to receive thy sacred gift, sith those holy ancient Patriarchs, and Prophets,

phets, yea Kings also and Princes with the whole people, have shewed so great zeal of devotion to thy divine service.

7. The most devout King David danced before the Ark of God with all his force, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times past upon his Forefathers. He made Instruments of sundrie kinds, he published Psalmes, and appointed them to be sung with joy: himself also oftentimes played upon the harp. Being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost, he taught the people of Israel to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to bless and praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such memory of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament, what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me, and all Christian people in the presence of this Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

8. O God the invisible Creatour of the world, how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding of man! This chiefly draweth

aweth the hearts of the devout,  
and inflameth their desire. For thy  
true faithfull servants that dispose  
their whole life to amendment, by  
his most worthy Sacrament, often-  
times receive great grace of devotion,  
and love of virtue.

10. O admirable and hidden grace  
of this Sacrament, which onely the  
faithfull of Christ do know: but the  
unfaithfull, and such as are slaves un-  
to sinne cannot conceive nor feel. In  
this Sacrament spirituall grace is gi-  
ven, and lost virtue is restored in the  
soul, and beautie disfigured by sinne  
returneth again. This grace is some-  
times so great, that with the fulnesse  
of devotion, which is here given, not  
onely the mind, but the weak bo-  
dy also feeleth great increase of  
strength.

11. Our coldnesse and negligence  
surely is much to be bewailed and pit-  
ied, that we are not drawn with  
greater affection to receive Christ in  
whom all the hope and reward of  
those that are to be saved doth con-  
sist. For he is our sanctification and  
redemption; he is the comfort of pas-  
sengers, and the everlasting fruition  
of Saints. It is much therefore to be  
lamented that many do so little con-  
sider this comfortable mysterie, which  
rejoyceth

rejoyceth heaven, and preserveth the whole world. O blindness and hardness of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh the greatness of so unspeakable a gift, but rather cometh by the daily use thereof to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament should be celebrated in one place onely, and consecrated by one onely Minister in the world; with how great desire dost thou think would men be affected to that place and what esteem would they have of such a Minister of Almighty God by whom they might enjoy the consolation of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered up in many places, that so the grace and love of God to man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is common throughout the world. Thanks be unto thee, good Jesu, everlasting Pastour of our souls, that hast vouchsafed to refresh us poore and banished men with thy precious body and bloud, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.



CHAP. II.

*That great goodnesse and charitie of  
God is bestowed upon man, in  
this Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**P**Resuming of thy goodnesse and  
great mercie, O Lord, being sick,  
I approach unto my Saviour, hungrie  
and thirstie to the fountain of life,  
needie to the King of heaven, a ser-  
vant unto my Lord, a creature to my  
Creatour, desolate to my mercifull  
Comforter. But whence is this to me,  
that thou vouchsafest to come unto  
me? Who am I that thou shouldest  
give thy self unto me? How dare a  
sinner presume to appear before thee?  
And thou, how dost thou vouchsafe  
to come unto a sinner? Thou knowest  
thy servant, and seest that he hath no  
good thing in him, for which thou  
shouldest bestow this benefit upon  
him. I confesse therefore my unwor-  
thinesse, and I acknowledge thy  
goodnesse; I praise thy mercie, and  
give thee thanks for this thy unspeak-  
able charitie. For thou doest this for  
thine own goodnesse, not for any me-  
rits of mine, to the end that thy  
goodnesse may be better known unto  
me, thy charitie more abundantly  
shewed,

shewed, and thy humilitie more highly commended. Since therefore it is thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy bountie is also pleasing to me, & I do wish that my offences may be no hinderance unto it.

2. O most sweet and bountifull Jesu, how great reverence and thanks, with perpetuall praise, is due unto thee for the receiving of thy sacred bodie, whose worth and dignitie no man is able to expresse! But what shall I think of at this time, now that I am to receive this divine Sacrament, and to approach unto my Lord, to whom I am not able to give due reverence, and yet I desire to receive him devoutly? What can I think better, and more profitable, then to humble my self wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodnesse above me? I praise thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever: and I do despise, and submit my self unto thee, even into the depth of my unworthinesse.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of sinners! behold thou bowest thy self down unto me, who am not worthy so much as to look up unto thee! Behold thou comest unto me! it is thy will to be  
with

with me, thou invitest me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of Heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other truly then thy self, the lively bread, that descendest from heaven, and givest life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence this love proceedeth! what kind of favour and benignitie is this which shineth upon us! What thanks and praises are due unto thee for these benefits. O how good and profitable was thy counsel, when thou ordainedst it! How sweet and pleasant the banquet when thou gavest thy self to be our food! How wonderfull thy work, O Lord, how powerfull thy virtue, how unspeakable thy truth! For thou saidst the word, and all things were made; and this was done which thou commandedst.

5. A thing of great admiration, and worthy of faith, and surpassing the understanding of man, that thou, my Lord God, true God and Man, shouldst be exhibited unto us by the elements of bread and wine, and thy body worthily received should be the spirituall food of our soul. Thou who art the Lord of all things, and standest in need of none, hast pleased to dwell in us by means of this thy

R                      Sacrament :

Sacrament: preserve my heart and body unspotted, that with a chearfull and pure conscience I may often celebrate thy mysteries, and receive them to my everlasting health, which thou hast chiefly ordained and instituted for thy honour, and perpetuall memory.

6. Rejoyce, O my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift, and singular comfort left unto thee in this vale of tears. For as often as thou callest to mind this mystrie, and receivest the body of Christ; so often dost thou remember the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of the merits of Christ. For the charitie of Christ is never diminished, and the greatnesse of his mercie is never lessened. Therefore thou oughtest alwayes to dispose thy self hereunto by a fresh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive consideration this great mystery of thy salvation. So great, new, and joyfull it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comest to these holy mysteries, as if the same day Christ first descending into the wombe of the Virgin, were become man; or hanging on the crosse did suffer and die for the salvation of mankind.

CHAP. III.

*That it is profitable to commu-  
nicate often.*

The voice of the Disciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee,  
that I may be comforted in thy  
gift, and be delighted in thy holy  
banquet, which thou, O Lord, hast  
prepared in thy sweetnesse for the  
poore. Behold in thee is all whatso-  
ever I can or ought to desire: thou  
art my health, and my redemption,  
my hope, and my strength, my ho-  
nour, and my glorie. Make joyfull  
therefore this day the soul of thy  
servant, for that I have lifted it up to  
thee, my sweet Jesus. I desire to re-  
ceive thee now with devotion, and re-  
verence. I do long to bring thee into  
my house, that with Zacheus I may  
obtain to be blessed by thee, and  
numbred amongst the children of  
Abraham. My soul thirsteth to re-  
ceive thy bodie, my heart desireth to  
be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it suf-  
feeth. For besides thee no comfort is  
available. I cannot be without thee,  
nor live without thy visitation. And  
therefore I must often come unto  
thee, and receive thee as the onely

remedie of my health, lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy heavenly food. For so, most mercifull Iesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people, and curing sundrie diseases, I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way. Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul, and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker, and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessarie for me, that do so often fall and sine, so quickly wax dull and faint, that by often prayers and confession, and receiving of thy sacred bodie, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self, lest perhaps by long abstaining I fall from my holy purpose.

3. For man is prone unto evil from his youth, and unless this divine remedie help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil, and comforteth in good. For if I be now so often slack and negligent when I communicate, what would become of me, if I received not this remedy, and sought not after so great help? Though every day I be not fit, nor  
well

well prepared to communicate, I will endeavour notwithstanding at convenient times to receive the divine mysteries, and make my self partaker of so great a grace. For this is the onely chief comfort of a faithfull sou!, whilst she wandereth from thee in this mortall body, that being mindfull of her God, she often receive her Beloved with a devout mind.

4. O wonderfull benignitie of thy mercie towards us, that thou, Lord God, the Creatour and giver of life to all spirits, dost vouchsafe to come unto a poore sou!. and with thy whole Deitie and Humanitie to replenish her hunger. O happie mind, and blessed sou!, that is vouchsafed to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with spirituall joy! O how great a Lord doth she entertain! How beloved a guest doth she harbour! how pleasant a companion doth she receive! how faithful a friend doth she accept! how beautiful & noble a spouse doth she embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, & above all things that may be desired. Let heaven and earth and all their beantie be silent in thy presence. For what beantie and praise never they have, it is received from

thy bountie, and shall not equall the  
beautie of thy name, of whose wil-  
dome there is no end.

#### CHAP. IV.

*That many benefis are bestowed  
upon them that communicate  
devoutly.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**M**Y Lord God, prevent thy ser-  
vant in the blessings of thy  
sweetnesse, that I may obtain favour  
to approach worthily and devoutly to  
thy holy Sacrament: stirre up my  
heart unto thee, and deliver me from  
all heavinesse and sloth: visit me  
with thy comfort, that I may taste in  
spirit thy sweetnesse, which plenti-  
fully lyeth hid in this Sacrament, as  
in a fountain. Give light also to my  
eyes to behold so great a myserie,  
and strengthen me to believe it with  
undoubted faith. For it is thy work,  
and not mans power; thy sacred in-  
stitution, not mans invention. For no  
man is of himself able to compre-  
hend and understand these things,  
which surpasse the understanding even  
of Angels. What therefore shall I  
unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be  
able to search and comprehend of so  
high



high and sacred a mysterie?

2. O Lord in sinceritie of heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do verily believe, that thou art here present in the Sacrament. Thy holy pleasure is, that I receive thee, and by charitie do unite my self unto thee. Wherefore I have recourse unto thy Clemencie, and do crave thy speciall grace, that I may wholly melt in thee, and abound with love, and hereafter never admit any externall comfort. For this most high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the soul and bodie, the remedie of all spirituall sicknesse: by it my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakned, greater grace infused, virtue increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened, and charitie inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow, many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved that receive it devoutly, O my God, the Protectour of my soul, the strengthner of humane frailtie, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou impartest unto them much comfort against sundrie tribulations, and liftest them up from the depth of

their own baseness, to the hope of thy protection, and dost inwardly refresh and illustrate them with a certain new grace, in such sort, that they who before Communion felt themselves heavie and indisposed, afterwards being strengthened with heavenly meat and drink, do find in themselves a great change to the better. Which thou dost so dispose to thy elect, that they may truly acknowledge, and patiently prove, how great their own infirmitie is, and what benefit and grace they receive from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull, and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, cheerfull, and full of devorion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of sweetnesse, doth not carry away from thence at least some little sweetnesse? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a fountain alwayes full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw at the full out of this fountain, nor drink my fill, I will notwithstanding set my lips to the mouth of this heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh any thirst; to the end I wither not wholly

who  
And  
left  
rub  
ing  
to  
ob  
by  
Sa  
un  
Bl  
me  
Le  
un  
ye  
I

b  
I  
t  
t  
P  
r  
s  
T

wholly away and utterly perish. And though I be not altogether celestiall, nor so inflamed as the Cherubins and Seraphins, notwithstanding I will endeavour to apply my self to devotion, and dispose my heart to obtain some small spark of divine fire by humble receiving of this life-giving Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jesu, most Blessed Saviour, do thou supply for me, most bountifull and gracious Lord, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I labour in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with sinnes, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with many evil passions, and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my self, and all mine, that thou maist keep me, and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honour and glorie of thy name, who hast prepared thy Bodie and Bloud to be my meat and my drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, my zeal and devotion may increase.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministeriall function.*

The voice of Christ.

**I**F thou hadst angelicall puritie, and the sanctitie of S. John Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive, nor handle this Sacrament. For it is not within the compasse of the deserts of men, that man should consecrate and handle the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the bread of Angels. A great myserie, and great is the dignitie of the Ministers of God, to whom is granted that which is not permitted to the Angels. For Ministers alone rightly instituted in the Church have power to celebrate, and consecrate the bodie of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, using the words of God, by Gods commandment and appointment, but God is there the principall Authour, and invisable Worker, to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore to give more credit to God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, then to thine own sense, or to any visibie signe! And therefore thou art to come unto

Ch. 5. or, *The following of Christ.* 267  
unto this Myſterie with fear and reverence. Conſider attentively with thy ſelf, and ſee what that is, whereof the Miniſterie is delivered unto thee by the impoſition of the hands of the Biſhop. Behold thou art made a Priſt, and conſecrated to officiate : ſee now that in due time thou offer Sacrifice unto God faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy ſelf ſo, as thou maſt be without reproof. Thou haſt not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a ſtraiter band of diſcipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctitie. A Miniſter ought to be adorned with all kind of virtue, and to give example of good life to others. His converſation ſhould not be according to the ordinarie and common proceedings of men, but like to the Angels in heaven, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Miniſter is the Vicegerent of Chriſt, to pray humbly with a proſtrate mind unto God for himſelf and the whole people, and know that he is placed as a Mediatour between God and the ſinner. Neither ought he to ceaſe from prayer till he obtain grace and mercie. When a Miniſter doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living, and  
maketh

268 *The Christians pattern*, Lib. IV. Ch.  
maketh himself partaker of all good  
deeds.

## CHAP. VI.

*An Interrogation of the exercise  
before Communion.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**W**HEN I weigh thy greatnesse, O  
Lord, and my unworthinesse, I  
tremble, and am confounded in my  
self. For if I come not unto thee,  
I flie from life; and if I unwor-  
thily intrude my self, I incurre  
thy displeasure. What therefore shall  
I do, my God, my helper, and my  
counsellour in necessitie?

2. Teach me the right way, ap-  
point me some exercise futable to  
this holy mystrie of sacred Commu-  
nion. For it is good for me to know,  
how I should reverently and devout-  
ly prepare my heart unto thee, for  
the profitable receiving of thy Sacra-  
ment, or for the celebrating of so  
great and divine a mystrie.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

*Of the discessing of our own conscience,  
and purpose of amendment.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**A**bove all things, the Minister of God ought to come to celebrate, handle, and receive this Sacrament with great humilitie of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a Godly desire of the honour of the divine Majestie. Examine diligently thy conscience, and to thy power purge and cleaue it with true contrition, and humble confession: so as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, and hinder thy free access to these heavenly mysteries. Repent thee of all thy sinnes in generall and in particular bewail thy dayly offences. And if thou hast time, confesse unto God in the secret of thy heart, all the miseries of thy disordered passions.

1. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so subject to sensualitie, so addicted to the world, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchfull over thy outward senses, so often intangled  
with

with many vain fantasies, so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interieur, so prone to laughter and immodestie, so hard to tears and compunction, so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictnesse of life and zeal, so curious to heare news and see vain sights, so slack to imbrace that which tendeth to thine own humiliation and contempt, so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping, so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence, so loose in manners, so outrageous in deeds, so greedy to meat, so deaf to the word of God, so hastie to rest, so slow to labour, so watchfull to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hastie to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so negligent in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating the Communion, so drie in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldome wholly recollected, so suddenly moved to anger, so apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyfull in prosperitie, so weak in adversitie, so often purposing much good, and performing little.

3. These and other thy defects confessed, and bewailed with sorrow, and  
great



great dislike of thine own infirmitie, make a firm purpose alwayes to amend thy self, and to go forwards in virtue. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will offer thy self up to the honour of my name, a perpetuall sacrifice in the altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy bodie and soul unto me, that so thou maist also obtain favour to come worthily to offer sacrifice unto God, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my bodie.

4. For there is no oblation worthy, nor satisfaction greater, for the washing away of sinnes, then to offer up our selves unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent, as I live, saith our Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, I will not remember his sinnes any more, but they shall be all forgiven him, and fully pardoned.

## CHAP. VIII.

*Of the oblation of Christ on the Crosse,  
and resignation of our selves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**A**S I willingly offered up my self unto God my Father, with my hands stretched forth on the Crosse, and my bodie naked for thy sinnes, so that nothing remained in me that was not turned into a sacrifice for the appeasing of the divine wrath, so oughtest thou also to offer up thy self willingly unto me dayly, as a pure and holy oblation, with thy whole force and desire, in as heartie a manner as thou canst. What do I require of thee more, then that thou resigne thy self wholly unto me? Whatsoever thou givest besides thy self is of little account in my sight, for I seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee to have all things whatsoever besides me; so neither can it please me whatsoever thou givest, if thou offerest not up thy self. Offer thy self unto me, and give thy self wholly to God, and thy offering shall be gratefull. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and bloud for thy food, that I might

might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abidest in thy self, and dost not offer thy self up freely unto my will, thy oblation is not entire, neither shall the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly illuminated, and enjoy true libertie of heart, for that they do not resolve wholly to denie themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true, Unless one forsake all, he cannot be my Disciple. If thou therefore wish to be mine, offer up thy self unto me with thy whole desires.

# CHAP. IX.

*That we ought to offer up our selves,  
and all that is ours unto God,  
and to pray for all.*

## The voice of the Disciple.

**T**hine, O Lord, are all things that are in heaven, and in earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain alwayes thine. O Lord, in sinceritie of my heart I offer my self unto thee this day, in sacrifice of perpetuall praise,  
S to

to be thy servant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body, which in the presence of the Angels, invisibly attending here upon thee, I offer up this day unto thee, that it may be to the health of my soul, and the salvation of all thy people.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my finnes and offences, which I have committed in the sight of thee, and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I first could sinne, to this houre, upon thy holy altar; that thou maist consume and burn them all with the fire of thy charitie, and wash out all the stains of my finnes, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me again thy grace, which I lost by sinne, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully in the kisse of peace.

3. What can I do for my finnes, but humbly confesse & bewail them, and intreat alwayes for mercie without intermission; I beseech thee, heare me in thy abundant mercie, when I stand before thee my God. All my finnes are very displeasing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I am sorry, and will be sorry for them as long as I live, and am readie to repent, and do any thing  
that

that may move thee to pardon them. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sinnes for thy holy names sake : save my soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious bloud. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercie, I resigne my self over into thy hands. Do with me according to thy goodnesse, not according to my wickednesse, and manifold iniquitie.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maist amend and sanctifie it, that thou maist make it gratefull and acceptable unto thee, and alwayes perfect more and more that which thou hast begun, and bring me also, who am the slothfull and unprofitable creature, to a good and blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly desires of devout persons, the necessities of my parents and friends, my brethren and sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my self or to others for thy love, and that have desired me to pray for them, and all theirs : that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain, and being freed from all evils,

276 *The Christians pattern*, Lib. IV.  
may joyfully give worthy thanks to  
thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my  
prayers, especially for them who have  
in any thing wronged, grieved, or  
slandered me, or have done me any  
damage or displeasure; and for those  
also, whom I have at any time greiv-  
ed, troubled, and scandalized by  
words, or deeds, wittingly, or at una-  
wares: that it may please thee to  
forgive us all our sinnes, and offences,  
one against another. Take, O Lord,  
from our hearts all jealousie, all in-  
dignation, wrath, and contention, and  
whatsoever may hurt Charitie, and  
weaken brotherly love. Have mercy,  
O Lord, have mercie on those that  
crave thy mercie: give grace unto  
them, that stand in need thereof, and  
grant that we may be worthe to en-  
joy thy grace, and attain to life ever-  
lasting, Amen.

#### CHAP. X.

*That the holy Communion is not  
lightly to be forsaen.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**T**Hou oughtest often to have re-  
course to the Fountain of grace,  
and of divine mercie, to the Fountain  
of

of goodnes, and of all pietie, that thou maist be cured of thy sinnes and passions, and be made more strong and vigilant against all temptations and deceits of the Devil: The enemy knowing the greatest profit and remedie to consist in the holy Communion, endeavoureth by all means and occasions to withdraw and hinder faithfull and devout persons from it.

2. Some when they purpose to receive the sacred Communion suffer greatest assaults of the Devil. For that wicked spirit (as it is written in Job) cometh amongst the Sonnes of God, to trouble them with his accustomed malice and impietie, or to make them over fearfull and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtil assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether abstain from this divine food, or at least come unto it with lesse devotion. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and malicious suggestions, be they never so filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to contemne and scorn him, miserable wretch, and not to omit the sacred communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive

care for the obtaining of devotion, and a certain anxietie for the making of thy Confession hindereth thee. Follow in these occasions the counsel of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it hindreth the grace of God, and overthroweth devotion. Omit not for every small vexation of the mind that happeneth to receive this holy Sacrament, but go presently to confesse thy sinnes, and willingly forgive others whatsoever offences they have done against thee: and if thou hast offended any, humbly crave pardon, and God will willingly forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay confession of thy sinnes, and to deferre receiving? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venome presently, make hast to take a remedie, and thou shalt find it better, then if thou deferredst it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, perhaps to morrow some greater will fall out, and so thou maist be hindred a long time from these diuine mysteries, and become more unfit. Stirre up thy self, and shake of all heavinesse and sloth with the greatest force and speed thou canst. For it profiteeth nothing to continue long in disquietnesse and trouble of mind, and for dayly occuring



curing impediments to withdraw thy self from the Sacraments. Yea it hurteth very much to deferre Communion long, for it is wont to breed a great and dangerous dulnesse. Alas, some cold and dissolute people do willingly deferre the sacred Communion, lest they should be bound to greater watch over themselves.

6. O how little charitie and weak devotion have they that so easily omit the receiving of these holy mysteries! How happie is he and gratefull to God, who ordereth so his life, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, that he may be readie and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without note. If any one sometimes abstain of humilitie, or by reason of some lawfull impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedeth of coldnesse, he must stirre himself up, and do what lieth in him, and God will prosper his desire, for the good will he hath to do it, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawfull hinderance doth happen, he must alwayes have yet a good will, and loving desire to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament.

For a devout person may every day and houre profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually : and yet on certain dayes, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with a reverent desire the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honour and glorie of God, then his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly fed, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the mysteric of the Incarnation, and the Passion of Christ, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himself, but when a feast draweth near, and when custome compelieth him thereunto, shall often be unprepared. Blessed is he that offereth himself up as a Sacrifice and burnt offering to our Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Thou oughtest not to be tedious and troublesome to others, but to observe the common course according to the appointment of thy Superiours : and rather frame thy self to the profit of others, then to thine own devotion or desire.

CHAP. XI.

*That the Body of Christ, and the holy  
Scriptures, are most necessarie  
unto a faithfull soul.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet Lord Jesu, how great is the delight of a devout soul that feasteth with thee in thy banquet, where there is no other meat offered to be eaten but thy self, her onely beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart. And verily it would be a great comfort unto me, to poure out tears from the bottome of my heart in thy presence, and with devout Magdalene to wash thy feet with the tears of mine eyes. But where is this devotion? Where is so plentiful shedding of holy tears? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart should be inflamed and dissolve into tears for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament truly present, though darkened and in a shadow.

2. For to behold thee in thine own divine brightnesse, mine eyes would not be able to endure it, neither could the whole world stand in the clearnesse of the glory of thy Ma-

jestie. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in heaven; but I, as yet for the time, in faith; they in his proper form, and without shadow. I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, untill the day of everlasting brightnesse break forth, and the shadows of figures passe away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the Blessed in heavenly glorie need not the remedie of Sacraments, who rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding his glorie face to face, and being transformed by his brightnesse into the brightnesse of the incomprehensible Deitie: they taste the Word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilest I remember these thy wonderfull works, all spirituall comfort whatsoever becometh very tedious unto me: for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account of whatsoever I see or heare in this life. Thou art my witnesse, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this  
is

is not possible whilst I remain in this mortall life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdome of heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe: what they hoped for, I expect: whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the mean time, I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints. I have also devout books for my comfort, and for the guide of my life, and above all these, thy most holy Body for a singular remedie and refuge.

4. For I perceive two things to be chiefly necessarie for me in this life, without which this miserable life would be insupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this bodie, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me, weak creature, thy sacred Bodie for the refectiō of my soul and bodie; and hast set thy word as a light unto my feet: without these two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul,  
and

and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called the two tables set on the one side and the other, in the store house of the holy Church. One is the holy table, containing the sacred bread; that is the precious body of Christ: the other is of the divine law, containing holy doctrine, teaching true faith, and certainly leading to the part of the Temple within the veil, where is the Holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Jesus, light of everlasting light, for thy table of holy doctrine, at which thou servest us by thy servants, the Prophets and Apostles, & other Doctours

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creatour and redeemer of man, who to manifest thy charitie to the whole world, hast prepared a greater supper, wherein thou hast offered to be eaten, not the mysticall lambe, but thine own most sacred Body and Bloud, rejoicing all the faithfull with thy holy banquet, and replenishing them to the full with thy heavenly Cup, in which are all the delights of heaven; and the holy Angels do feast with us, but with a more happie sweetnesse.

6. O how great & honourable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is granted with sacred words to consecrate the Lord of Majestie, with their  
lips

V.  
fe.  
a-  
er,  
h.  
ng  
us  
ne  
e,  
f-  
in  
o-  
s,  
t-  
u  
-  
s  
r  
-  
,  
e  
t  
y  
b  
V.  
Ch. 11. or, *The following of Christ.* 285

lips to blesse him, with their hands to hold him, with their own mouth to receive him, and to administer him to others! O how clean ought to be those hands, how pure that mouth, how holy the body, how unspotted the heart, in whom the Authour of purity so often entreth! Nothing but holy, no word but chaste and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes that are wont to behold the body of Christ; the hands pure and lifted up to heaven, that use to handle the Creatour of heaven and earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law, Be ye holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we, who have undertaken the office of Priesthood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a sincere conscience. And if we cannot live in so great innocencie as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner to bewail the sinnes which we have committed, and in the spirit of humility, and sincere intencion to serve thee hereafter with more zeal and devotion.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XII.

*That he who is to communicate ought  
to prepare himself with great  
diligence.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**I** Am the lover of puritie, and the giver of all sanctitie. I seek a pure heart, there is the place of my rest. Make readie and adorn for me a great chamber, and I will make with thee the Passeover for my Disciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee, purge the old leaven, and make clean the dwelling of thy heart: shut out the whole world, and all tumult of vices: sit like a sparrow solitary upon the house top, and think of thy offences in the bitterness of thy soul. For every lover prepareth the best and fairest room for his beloved; and herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the worth of no action of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy self a whole yeare together, and think on nothing else but of my mercie and grace onely. Thou art suffered to come to my table, like a  
begger



begger invited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself, and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, nor for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and heartie affection receive the bodie of thy beloved Lord and God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supplie what is wanting in thee: come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devotion on thee, give thanks to God; for it is given thee, not for that thou deservest it, but because I have mercie on thee. If thou have it not, but rather feel thy self drie, continue in prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over untill thou obtainest some crumbe or drop of grace. Thou hast need of me, not I of thee, neither comest thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctifie and make thee better. Thou comest that thou maist be sanctified by me and united unto me, that thou maist receive new grace, & be stirred up again to amendment: Neglect not this grace but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy soul.

4. But

4. But thou oughtest not onely to prepare thy self to devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the carefull guard of thy self after lesse exacted, then devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards is the best preparation thou canst make for the obtaining again of greater grace; because that mans mind becometh very indisposed, if he presently poure himself out to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in some secret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou hast him whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughtest wholly to give thy self, that so thou maist live hereafter, not in thy self, but in me, without all care.

### CHAP. XIII.

*That a devout soul ought to desire with  
her whole heart to be united unto  
Christ in the Sacrament.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**H**OW may I obtain this, O Lord,  
that I may find thee alone, and  
open my whole heart unto thee, and  
enjoy thee as my soul desireth? And  
that

ely that not man may look upon me, nor  
 ore any creature move me or respect me,  
 to but thou alone maist speak unto me,  
 ou and I to thee, as the beloved is wont  
 her to speak to his beloved, and a friend  
 ter to banquet with his friend. This I  
 on pray for, this I desire, that I may be  
 ds wholly united unto thee, and may  
 nst withdraw my heart from all created  
 of things, and more and more, by sacred  
 nd Communion and often celebrating,  
 re- learn to tast of heavenly and ever-  
 rd lasting sweetnesse. O Lord God, when  
 re- shall I be wholly united unto thee,  
 oy and swallowed up by thee and alto-  
 m gether forgetfull of my self! thou in  
 e. me, and I in thee! and so grant us  
 ft both to continue in one.

2. Thou art my beloved, the  
 choicest amongst thousands, in whom  
 my soul hath taken pleasure to dwell  
 all the dayes of her life. Thou art  
 my peace-maker in whom is greatest  
 peace, and true rest, without whom  
 is labour and sorrow, and infinite mi-  
 serie. Thou art a hidden God, and  
 thy counsel is not with the wicked,  
 but thy speech is with the humble  
 and simple of heart. O Lord, how  
 sweet is thy spirit, who to the end  
 thou mightest shew thy sweetnesse to-  
 wards thy children, vouchsafest to  
 feed them with the most delightfome  
 T bread,

bread, which descendeth from heaven, and is full of all sweetnesse. Surely there is no other Nation so great that hath Gods approaching unto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithfull, unto whom for their dayly comfort, and for the lifting up their hearts to heaven, thou givest thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other Nation is there so famous, as the Christian people? or what creature under heaven so beloved as a devout soul, to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace! O admirable favour! O infinite love, singularly bestowed upon man! But what shall I give unto our Lord in return of this grace, for so singular a charitie? There is no other thing more gratefull that I am able to give, then to bestow my heart wholly on my God, and to unite it perfectly unto him. Then shall all my bowels rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me, If thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

*Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O How great is the store of thy sweetnesse, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with great devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded, and blush within my self, that I come so negligently and coldly to thy table of the holy Communion: that I remain so drie, and without spirituall motion or feeling, that I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and moved, as many devout persons have been, who out of a vehement desire of receiving, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themselves from weeping, but with the desire both of soul and body they earnestly longed after thee, O God, the lively fountain; being not otherwise able to temper nor satisfie their hunger but by receiving thy body with all joy and spirituall greedinesse.

2. O most ardent faith of those  
T 2 persons,

persons, a probable argument of thy sacred presence ! For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so within them, whilst thou, O blessed Jesu, walkest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervencie is oftentimes farre off from me. Be mercifull unto me, good Jesu, sweet and bountifull Lord, and grant me thy poore needie creature to feel sometimes, at least in this holy Sacrament, a little cordiall desire of thy love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodnesse increased, and that my charitie once perfectly inflamed, after the tasting of heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercie, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me in thy bounteous clemencie with the spirit of fervour, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so especially devoted unto thee, yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

CHAP. XV.

*That the grace of devotion is obtained by  
humility, and deniall of our selves.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**T**Hou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantiy, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and confidently, to receive it joyfully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the time and manner of this heavenly visitation to God, untill it shall be his pleasure to come. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou seelest inwardly little or no devotion; and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately for it. God often giveth in a short moment that which he hath long time denied: he giveth sometimes in the end that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be alwayes presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, it could not be well indured by a weak man. Therefore devotion is to be expected with good hope, and humble patience: yet impute it to thy self, and thy sinnes, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken from thee. It is sometimes

a small matter that hindreth and hideth grace from us, if it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindreth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou givest thy self to God, and seekest not this nor that, for thine own pleasure or will, but settlest thy self wholly in him, thou shalt find thy self united unto him, and quiet. For nothing will tast so well, and please thee so much, as the will and pleasure of Almighty God. Whosoever therefore with a sincere heart directeth his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordinate love, or dislike of any creature, shall be most fit to receive grace, and worthie of the gift of devotion. For our Lord bestoweth his blessings there, where he findeth his vessels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh these basest things, and dieth to himself by contempt of himself, so much the more speedily grace cometh, and entreth in more plentifully, and lifteth up the heart that is free to a higher state of grace.

4. Then shall he see, and abound, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged,



Ch. 16. or, *The following of Christ.* 295  
enlarged, because the hand of our Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hand for ever. Behold, so shall the man be blessed that seeketh Almighty God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth great grace of divine union, in receiving the holy mysteries, for that he regardeth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all he prizeth the honour and glory of God.

#### CHAP. XVI.

*That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.*

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet and loving Lord, whom I now desire to receive devoutly, thou knowest my infirmities and the necessity which I endure; with how many sinnes I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee thy heavenly comfort, and the ease of my pain. I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my secrets are open, and who can onely perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what it is, whereof above all  
T 4 things

things I stand in most need, and how poore I am in virtues.

2. Behold I stand before thee, poore and naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refresh this thy hungrie and needy creature, give heat unto my coldnesse with the fire of thy love; give light unto my blindnesse with the brightnesse of thy presence. Turn all earthly things into bitterness to me, all things grievous and contrary, into patience, all base and created things, into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon earth: be thou onely sweet and delightful unto me from henceforth for evermore, for thou onely art my meat, and my drink, my love and my joy, my delight and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldest wholly inflame, burn, and change me into thee, that I might be made one spirit with thee by the grace of inward union and melting of fervent love! Suffer me not to go from thee hungrie and drie, but deal mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvell if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and die in my self, sith thou art fire burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart,

Ch. 17. or, *The following of Christ.* 297  
heart, and inlightning the understanding.

## CHAP. XVII.

*Of fervent love, and vehement desire  
to receive Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

**W**ITH great devotion and burning love, with most heartie affection and fervour I desire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament, who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlasting love, my whole good, my happiness without end, I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire, and worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had those most sweet inflamed desires: yea whatsoever also a devout mind can conceive and desire, all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto

to thee. I wish to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and ail mine unto thee, my Lord God, my Creator, and my Redeemer, I desire to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise, and honour, with such gratitude, worthinesse, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most blessed Mother, the glorious Virgin Mary received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mysterie of thy incarnation, and said, Behold the hand-maid of our Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, John Baptist, cheerfully leaped with joy of the holy Ghost, whilst he was yet shut up in his mothers wombe; and afterwards seeing Jesus walking amongst men, humbling himself very much, said with devout affection, The friend of the Bridegrome that standeth and heareth him rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegrome: so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart.

Where-

Wherefore I offer also and present unto thee the joyes, fervent desires, excesses of mind, spirituall illuminations, and heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the virtues and praises exercised, and to be exercised, by all creatures in heaven and earth, for my self, and all such as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, the affections of my heart, and desires, which I have to give thee, infinite praise and thanks, which according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatnesse are due unto thee. These I yield thee, and desire to yield thee every day and moment: I do intreat and invite all the heavenly spirits, and all thy devout servants to give thanks and praises together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy name with great joy, and fervent devotion, and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy most high Sacrament, and receive it with full faith, find grace, and mercie at thy hands, and pray humbly for me sinfull creature. And when they shall have obtained their desired

fired devotion and joyfull union, and depart from thy sacred heavenly table well comforted and marvelously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poore and needy soul.

### CHAP. XVIII.

*That man be not a curious searcher of this Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense unto faith.*

The voice of the Beloved.

**T**HOU oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not sink into the depth of doubt. He that is a searcher of Majestie shall be oppressed by glory. God is able to work more then man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so he be alwayes readie to be taught, and do endeavour to walk in the sound paths of true doctrine.

2 Blessed is that simplicitie, that forsaketh the difficult wayes of questions, and goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion, whilst they would search after high things. Faith and sincere life are exacted

exacted at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor the depth of the mysteries of God. If thou dost not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith, and the light of knowledge shall be given thee in that degree, as shall be profitable and necessary for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament: but this is not to be imputed to them but rather to the enemy. Do not regard nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts moved by the enemy, but believe the word of God, believe his Prophets, and the wicked Serpent will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the servant of God to suffer such things. For he tempteth not Infidels and sinners, whom he already securely possesseth, but he sundrie waves tempreth and vexeth the faithfull and devout.

4. Go forward therefore with a sincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament with unfeigned reverence, and whatsoever thou art not able to understand commit securely to Almighty God. God deceiveth

ceiveth thee not : he is deceived that trusteth too much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the humble, giveth understanding to little ones, openeth the senses to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and naturall search ought to follow faith, not to go before it, nor impugne it. For faith and love do chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner in this most blessed and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting, and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in heaven and in earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderful works. If the works of God were such as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderfull, and unspeakable.

FINIS.

